MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
186, 188, 195, 197, 202, 203, 206, 234, 236, 238-247, 249, 251, 254-274, 277-295, 297-306, 308-313, 315, 316, 318, 319, 322-328, 330, 332-339, 340-354, 357, 358, 361-368.
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PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760

Phone (415) 923-9814
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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

Working all day to tour with her (band)mates...

WILL BLOMQUIST

- FLESH WORLD-12" / DEEP WOUND-I Saw It-EP
- STIGMATHE-both EPs
- PERMANENT RUIN-Más Allá de la Muerte-EP
- RAKTA-12" / NAPOLNARIZ-El Negocio-EP
- LAST CHAOS/VAARALLINEN-split-EP
- KOROVA-lathe-lathe / NEMESIS-Gyou-Shou-EP
- BASTARD NOISE/LACK OF INTEREST-split-12"
- METRO CULT-45 / VIDEO-45
- PESADILLA DISTOPIKA-live / VAASKA-live
- COLD CIRCUITS-live

MITCH CARWELL

- TRUE BELIEVERS-Accept It!-EP
- DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND-Shark/Burnin' Sand-45
- BRATS-Be a Man-EP
- APACHE-45
- EPICYCLE-You're Not Gonna Get It-LP
- DEEP WOUND-I Saw It-EP
- VIDEO-(Join the) Hate Wave/Captivity-45
- SEX CRIME-45
- FLESH WORLD-12"
- VEXX-12"

ROBERT COLLINS

- VILE FAITH / COKE BUST-live
- LA MISMA / NOMAD-live
- OLD LINES/ WARXGAMES-live
- SKEMÄTA-live / POST TEENS-live
- DIENTE PERRO / UN FINAL FATAL-live
- NUNHEX-live / SO PASTEL-live
- ASSHOLE PARADE-live
- HARSH WORDS / CHEAP ART-live
- BACK TO BACK / MERCENARY-live
- SUPPRESSION-live

LAYLA GIBBON

- HOUSEHOLD-Elaines-EP
- VEXX-12"
- FRAU-demo
- WET DRAG-demo
- C.O.M.A.-LP
- TRUE BELIEVERS-Accept It!-EP
- VIDEO-(Join the) Hate Wave/Captivity-45
- HUSBANDS-Patty Waters-EP
- STIGMATHE-both EPs
- RUSTED SHUT-Rehab-LP

DAN GOETZ

- DEEP WOUND-I Saw It-EP
- HOUNDS OF HATE-live
- PERMANENT RUIN-Más Allá de la Muerte-EP
- BREAKDOWN-Runnin' Scared-LP
- VOLATILE SUBSTANCE-live
- PIG DNA-live / REACHAROUNDS-LP
- VIDEO-(Join the) Hate Wave/Captivity-45
- CRIMINAL CODE-live
- VEXX-12"
- SPAZZ-Dwarf Jester Rising-LP

GREG HARVESTER

- DEAD MOON-live
- FLESH WORLD-12"
- BENNY THE JET RODRIGUEZ-Home.Run.-LP
- PSYCHO SQUATT-Tant de Crises-LP
- KOROVA-lathe cut / CAN OF BEANS-LP
- STRANGE MATTER-Ennui Actuation Dissolver-EP
- FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic-LP
- STRAIGHT CRIMES-45 / NO STATIK-demo
- PERMANENT RUIN-Más Allá de la Muerte-EP
- AUTONOMY/STREET EATERS-split-EP

KENNY KAOS

- MANDATES-LP
- FIRST BASE-LP
- SEX CRIME-he) Hate Wave/Captivity-45
- INSERTS-Komm Her!-EP
- BEDLAM KNIVES-45
- APACHE-45
- LOOTERS-Fall Alone/Looters-45
- SIMPLE CIRCUIT-LP
- BRIMSTONE HOWL-Magic Hour-LP
- EPICYCLE-You're Not Gonna Get It-LP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

CAROLYN KEDDY

SEX CRIME-45	ZIG ZAGS-Scavenger/Monster Wizard-45
DOSES-LP / RAKTA-12"	EPICYCLE-You're Not Gonna Get It-LP
APACHE-45	BRATS-Be A Man-EP
EUNUCH-Castration-EP / VEXX-12"	TRUE BELIEVERS-Accept It!-EP
VIDEO-(Join the) HATE WAVE/Captivity-45	C.O.M.A.-LP / NERVOUS EATERS-live

RAY LUJAN

CHEAP TIME-Exit Smiles-CD	DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND-Shark/Burnin' Sand-45
FIRST BASE-LP / MANDATES-LP	TEEN AGERS-I Hate It-CD
FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic-LP	UPSET-She's Gone-LP
GLASS HITS-Better Late Than Never-LP	WORRIERS-Cruel Optimist-LP
PSYCHO SQUATT-Tant de Crises-LP	BLATZ-live / SAMIAM-live

KEVIN MANION

The Bermuda Triangle of Top 10s...

RAY SUBURBIA

RAKTA-12"	VIDEO-(Join the) Hate Wave/Captivity-45
FLESH WORLD-12"	C.O.M.A.-LP
KOMPLIKATIONS-12"	CRISIS ALERT-Urban Decay-12"
STRANGE MATTER-Ennui Actuation Dissolver-EP	VEXX-12"
CATHOLIC SPIT/GENERACION SUICIDA-split-EP	DEEP WOUND-I Saw It-EP

LYDIA PHELPS

FLESH WORLD-12"	C.O.M.A.-LP
NAPRED U PROSLOST-1985-EP	KOMPLIKATIONS-Poverty-LP
GRUPA 92-Slike Preteklosti-LP	VEXX-12"
STIGMATHE-both EPs	CHEAP TIME-Exit Smiles-CD
PERMANENT RUIN-Más Allá de la Muerte-EP	MOD SUBS-Primitive by Today's Standards-LP

FRED SCHRUNK

FLESH WORLD-12"	STRAIGHT CRIMES-45
FUTURE VIRGINS-Late Republic-LP	LOW CHARGE-Charge Low-EP
GRUPA 92-Slike Preteklosti-LP	PERMANENT RUIN-MAs Alla de la Muerte-EP
LIBYANS-Exploited Language-LP	SLUTEVER-1994/Spit-45
VEXX-12"	CATHOLIC SPIT/GENERACION SUICIDA-split-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

RAKTA-12"	LOW CHARGE-Charge Low-EP
FLESH WORLD-12"	NAPRED U PROSLOST-1985-EP
PERMANENT RUIN-Más Allá de la Muerte-EP	MOD SUBS-Primitive by Today's Standards-LP
NEMESIS-Gyou-Shou-EP	STIGMATHE-both EPs
CATHOLIC SPIT/GENERACION SUICIDA-split-EP	DEEP WOUND-I Saw It-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

Rot #5	*No Gods No Mattress #21*
Acefalo #2	*Trash Heap #3*
Street Preacher #1	*Degenerate #14*
Turning the Tide Vol. 27	*Doris #30*
Koogmo #7	*Freak Tension #15*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Chuck Barrels	Bryony Beynon
Imogen Binnie	Graham Booth
John Fahy	Layla Gibbon
Tony Gunnarsson	Felix Havoc
George Impulse	Carolyn Keddy
Marissa Magic	George Matiaz
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#186/November '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/February '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/March '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/August '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/October '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waiffle, Flat Earth Recs.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, GOre Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/November '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war Scene Reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in IRaq," "Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/March '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany Scene Reports.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kämvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June'07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special-Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/ Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Reports. Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Ral Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report.

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/ Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/ Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History Part 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State POison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History Part 3.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses Zine.

#345/February '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report Part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester Zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scene Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/September '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground Part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary Part 2, Girth records.

#357/February '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/March '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/April '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power Zine Part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, Trust Zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power Zine Part II.

#363/August '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/September '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/ Population Zero, Texas Filth Scene Report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ Scene Report.

#366/November '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/December '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War// Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/January '13. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International Queer Scene Report.

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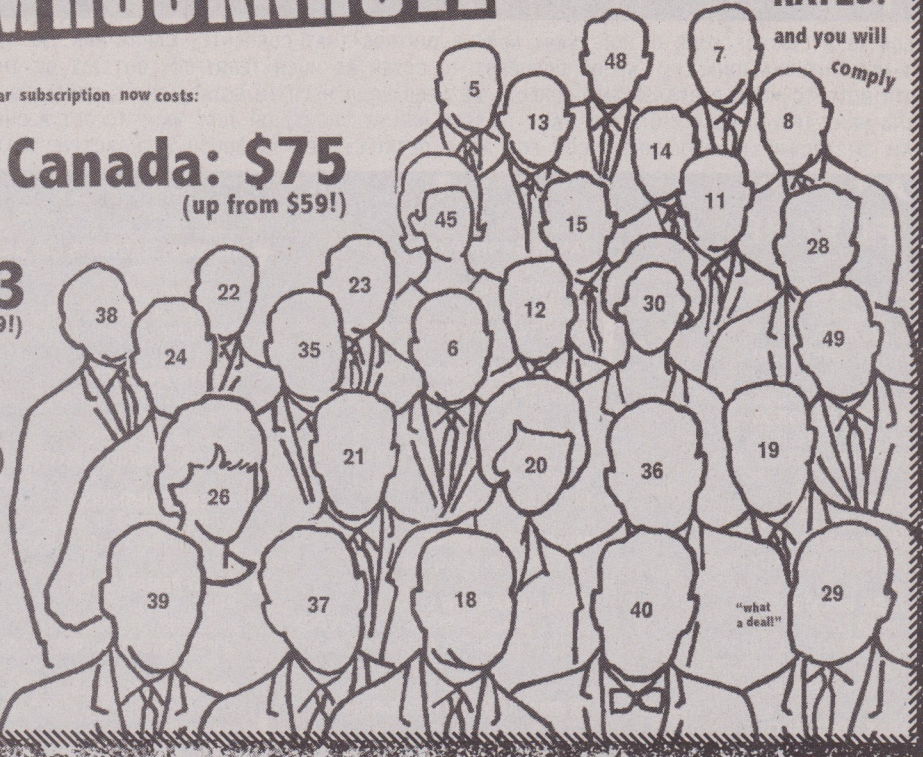

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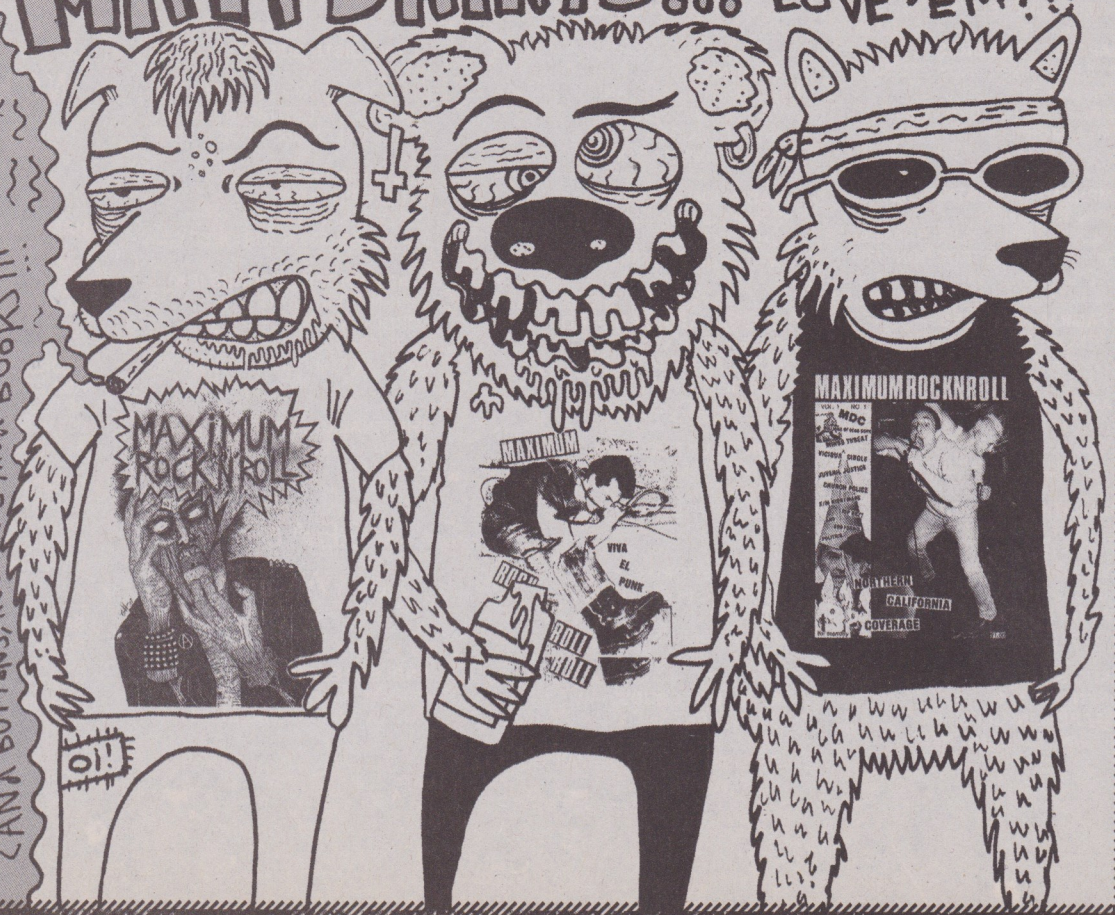

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760,
or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—
I feel a strong need to address the image on the header of the Stoic Violence interview in last month's issue (#369). Let me describe the image first: a woman leans dead up against a wall with a bullet hole in her forehead, with "Stoic Violence" written on the wall, and in the forefront is a hand holding a gun. Both figures display indicators of punk: the woman wears a leather jacket with buttons on it, and the hand with wearing black leather fingerless gloves, a spiked bracelet, and sleeve of a leather jacket. Upon researching the origin of this image, I discovered that it is the cover art for Stoic Violence's demo tape from 2012. I find this image immensely offensive, sickening, and frustrating, in that order. What are you saying with this image, Stoic Violence? Are you advocating murder? Do you hate women? Who is that woman? Are you just trying to be shocking? Is she supposed to symbolize someone real? Did you think about how a woman or survivor of abuse in the punk scene, already dealing with marginalization daily, might feel when seeing this? Are you saying something about punks? Does the image relate to a specific experience had by someone in the band, or someone they know? I have many more opinions about the image and the interview, but I'm choosing to be succinct and simply express the thoughts and feelings that came up for me when looking at the header. I've seen your band a few times and I read your interview, and I know, Brandon, that you "honestly don't care what anyone thinks about [you] or [Stoic Violence] as a band," but surely you care to explain the meaning behind using imagery like this. That's all I'm asking right now.
—Matt Badenhop

Dear MRR—
Some shit for review, the Born Loser *Future Killers* and *Moving On* 7" are what I'm sending on for review. Not sure if ya just call tapes "demos," but it sure doesn't matter to me.

If all fails, hurl the tapes at a wall; they break real nice. Please do not break the records, but if you really have to, I'll understand. We hail from the fabulous streets of Fresno, CA and *Moving On* is our third release. Theoretically the 7"s are $3 and the tapes are $2, but I sure can't remember the last time we sold one for that.
Yours always and forever,
—Born Loser

This polar vortex shit has been gnarly—we had to burn the records to stay warm. But don't worry; we reviewed the fire for y'all. Keep sending us stuff to break and we'll keep breaking it. Up the punx.
—Ray

Hello Maximum Rocknroll—
My name is John Tucci and I was in a thrash band called E.B.S. (Everybody Sucks) from Florida—we put out a 7" in 1991 and sent it in to *MRR* for review. We put some records out later with Failure Face and Hangnail. I was also in a band called Sodomized by Marcia Brady and Bob Suren put that out on Burrito Records.

About Tim Yohannan. I met Mr. Yohannan when I lived in San Francisco in 1996. Bob Suren came out to stay, was able to contact *MRR* and Tim invited us to the office. I know Matt Average was writing columns at the time. We walked in and Tim was very cool—you knew he was so intelligent and knew everything about music right off the bat. He had that presence that just commanded respect. We walked in and saw the albums and I couldn't believe it. It was just amazing and he was nice enough to let us thumb through all those records—I remember that green tape too! I remember him saying he didn't care about the value of the records, and that he just wanted the music, which I thought was pretty awesome. Him and Bob were talking about all this stuff, but I was just lost in those albums—then he let me tape some records! I was able to tape the first Bastards LP—I could never find that for some reason. I also taped the first Disclose EP and the Naked Hippy LP. He came in and said, "are you done yet?" I said, "Yes sir, thank you very much, sir." I was so honored that I had to give him that respect.

I also remember asking him if he liked Rupture and he said, "I don't like that metal shit." He asked me what I liked and I told him Icons of Filth, Swankys, Confuse, Disorder. He kinda just nodded. Bob told me a lot about what they talked about—he told Bob he was a communist but really didn't go into politics that much. He also said Biafra was cheap and one time didn't pay the tab when they were at Denny's. I guess those guys had a big falling out in the past. I can't remember her name but she was taking over for Tim—apparently she had just arrived and Tim was showing her some stuff on the computer—she seemed to be really nice too.

I also heard stories that Tim would go to Gilman at the beginning and would get in fights with skinheads with fucking baseball bats, until they were finally beaten away and never came back—that was an amazing story. I also noticed some machetes and baseball bats leaning against the wall next to the door. Tim said there had been death threats from people—like right-wingers or something. I also worked at Epicenter—I can't remember anybody's name that worked there—I do remember a lady whom I've seen hanging around the Rip Off crew, but that's about it. Tim would come in there before I went to the *MRR* office and would bring a stack of records—I didn't even know it was him until somebody told me a month later. I then asked him if he got a discount and he said, "No." I do remember him just walking to the back without saying anything, and I'm like, "Who the fuck is this guy?"

But Tim Yohannan is one the most important figures in music history and what he did was a wonderful gift to the underground.
Thanks again,
—John Tucci

Dear MRR—
Hey, the review you gave us was more about our press release than the music. Calling us self-proclaimed this and that. If you did an ounce of research you would see that we are legit. However, I now think you guys are amateur and enjoy slamming bands. You suck and I'm telling everyone I know this. To top it off you mail your crappy rag to us on top of it. I hope you idiots crash and burn. If you respected music and hard-working bands I could maybe take you seriously, but not anymore I don't.
—Evil Beaver

Our reviewers all have different tastes, opinions, and styles, and we recognize that not everyone is gonna be happy with every review we print, so thanks for the feedback! Letters like yours help us temper the steel that is MRR. *That being said, we're going to save your letter and file it in our "Complaints from 1993" cabinet. Keep it Evil!*
—Ray

Dear MRR—
I have been reading you for pretty near 20 years. If there is one consistency, it is the mention of ink getting on your fingers, smearing on the pages and staining your home. In all this time, that has never happened to me. What am I doing wrong?
Sincerely,
Smudgeless in S.A.
—Ray Salazar

Are you wearing gloves?
—Ray

Dear MRR—
What the fuck? New guy Ray starts and the cover price jumps up to $4.99?! Shows are supposed to be $5! *Not zines! Death to print media!*
Love,
—Punk

Dept. of Corrections

Last issue we had a printng error and lost the first page of the "Almost Ready" interview. We're running it again to make up for that error. Our apologies to all the NOLA punks!

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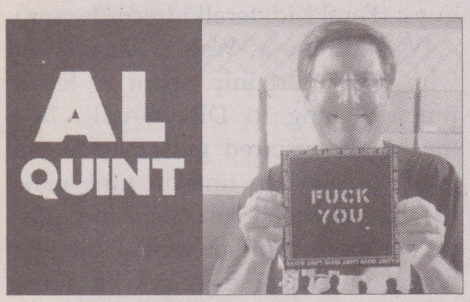

STRAIGHT PRIDE?

I imagine this would have been a good column for the Queer issue a few months back, but its genesis just happened in the past week or so and that's why I'm writing this now. There was recently a kerfuffle over the Tournament of Roses parade on New Years Day. A gay couple got married during the parade and the "family values" crowd was up in arms over it. People were urging boycotts, just horrified that the parade was promoting a deviant lifestyle. Oh, the horror!

I had a discussion about this story on my F*cebook page and an old punk scene acquaintance of mine—a former liberal turned conservative—had this to say: *"I have no problem with this I support the gay community... however I would like to see more activism from the other side. I would [like] to see a man-woman wedding float in the parade and would like to see scheduled straight pride parades as a regular occurrence. Again I support equal rights -- but would like to see the other side be more active staging events like the gay pride people do."*

The guy—his name is Collin—claimed he was being a bit tongue in cheek but that he meant what he said and it's still jaw-dropping. It's one of those times when you want to bang your head against the wall or, less painfully, do a facepalm. I suppose I shouldn't expect anything less from someone who worships at the altar of Sean Hannity and the rest of the Fox News vermin. I wrote about Collin some years back when I did a piece about "conservative punk" and he told me that we needed to stop the "Marxist Czars" in Obama's administration. Never mind that the Marxists overthrew the czars but the fact is there have been "czars" in both Republican and Democratic administrations. He also said that the soon to be former Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, one of the true wingnuts in the House (or as columnist Charlie Pierce calls her, The Girl With The Faraway Eyes) would have made a good president. "She'd be an American Margaret Thatcher," he crowed.

I don't think Collin's a bad guy and he's always been respectful and supportive of my work, but I sometimes just want to throw my hands up when hearing his political view points. He does say that two of his friends came out to him during the last year and that caused his views on homosexuality and gay marriage to change. That's great news. I only hope he snaps out of his right-wing stupor on other issues but it's a start.

But straight pride? Are you fucking kidding me? Another friend of mine, Katie (who is a lesbian), had something to say about straight pride. It sums up my thoughts in a nutshell—the lunacy of such a "movement"—and I'd rather give her the credit: *"when straight people get marginalized, harassed, fired, are unable to visit their sick partners in the hospital or collect survivor benefits, [are] bashed for being straight, killed for being straight, read about how a huge segment of society hates them for being straight and says they are going to hell because of it, or in some countries are stoned to death, then they should have a straight pride parade."*

Incidentally, there have been heterosexual marriages during the parade over the past 25 or so years. And eHarmony had a float in the parade that paid tribute to a couple on who met through the on-line dating service when they were both in their 70s. It should be mentioned that, for a long time, eHarmony wouldn't allow gay people to connect on its site. It took lawsuits for that to change. Settlements were reached in New Jersey and California and gay people are now accommodated through another site called Compatible Partners and customers have access to both sites for a single rate.

Still, the company's founder, Neil Clark Warren, claims that gay marriage *"damaged our company."* He also said that *"eHarmony really ought to put up $10 million and ask other companies to put up money and do a really first class job of figuring out homosexuality. At the very best, it's been a painful way for a lot of people to have to live. But at this point, at this age, I want America to start drawing together. I want it to be more harmonious."*

It's nice he wants us all to get along and he's probably right about it being painful—painful to gay people who have been subjected to verbal abuse, physical violence and denial of basic human rights. As for "figuring it out, what's to figure out? Warren was also associated with the hate group Focus on the Family, who are outspoken opponents of reproductive freedom and gay rights, right down to opposing anti-bullying regulations and laws that protect LGBT people.

I don't want to give Phil Robertson from *Duck Dynasty* any more publicity than he's already gotten over the past several weeks. I'd never even heard of this clown and didn't know anything about his show. Anyway, in case you missed it, he showed less-than-enlightened opinions about gay people in a *GQ* interview. Soon after that, a video of him speaking at church in Pennsylvania in 2010 surfaced. In the video, he says about gay people, *"they're full of murder, envy, strife, hatred. They are insolent, arrogant, God haters, they are heartless, they are faithless, they are senseless, they are ruthless, they invent ways of doing evil."*

And there are assholes that support this guy! Plenty of them. When there was a loud and vocal protest about what he said, there was a also a big backlash and an outpouring of venal anti-gay sentiment. Some of his fans have planned a Chick-Phil-A day at the Chic-fil-a Christian fast food establishments (Chic-fil-a claim they have no involvement) and people are encouraged to show up in camouflage gear and *"Stand for free speech. Sit for good food."* Good food? Hey, if his fans want to gorge themselves on artery-clogging junk food, I won't stop them. Perhaps it'll help thin the herd a bit, if you catch my drift.

PUNK PRIDE! ...or a not-so-clever way to segue into the record review segment...

You can read my Top 10 of 2013 in that section but here are a handful of other reviews. Let's start with a 7" that made that top 10 list, the debut 7" EP by MERCY KILLINGS. This is a new band with Mark Shubert from WASTED TIME and Mike Scibetta from DIRECT CONTROL, among other Virginia hardcore luminaries. Some of these guys were recently in VIOLENT OUTBURST and at least one song ("Force of Fusion") was in that band's repertoire. There ain't no mercy here. Just hardcore—loud and aggressive hardcore, influenced by POISON IDEA and with some D-beat thump. Not blinding thrash—these songs are mainly delivered at a measured, mid-to-fast pace. Mark sounds as bellicose as always and the music comes on full-tilt, enhanced by the band's two-guitar attack. Great start. (Beach Impediment, www.beachimpedimentrecords.blogspot.com)

TOXIC HOLOCAUST has come a long way since I saw them play in a basement space in scenic Allston, MA in 2005. Their latest album, *Chemistry of Consciousness*, showcases a ravenous, thrash-metal machine with meat cleaver riffing and non-excessive leads and down 'n dirty, growling vocals. '80s-inspired rage but without the party-hearty atmosphere. This is head-down, no-nonsense, punk-inspired material. Sure, there are a few pages taken from the Book of Slayer and some rock'n'roll moves and Swedish hardcore touches show up, as well, but I'm overanalyzing. Just turn it up loud and prepare to have your skull rattled. (Relapse, www.relapse.com)

BAD DADDIES and LOGNHAL-SMOTTAGNINGEN have teamed up for a strong split 7". BAD DADDIES don't mess around—four quick songs in rapid succession with nary a chance to catch your breath. Scrappy punk with feedback-laden guitar, although "The Flood" turns down the distortion for some minimalist, Rough Trade Records-type punk, while "Bad Year" has a catchy chorus. Fun, as always. Meanwhile, the band with the unpronounceable name once again connect with their goofball charm—they even have some handclaps. Minimalist, KBD-style punk meets hardcore from two gentlemen, one lives in Arizona and one in Sweden and the lyrics are in Swedish. (Emotional Response, schwoeff2@hotmail.com)

Speaking of bands with "bad" in their name that are quite good (I'll stop now), BAD PEOPLE have released a pair of 7"s in relatively quick succession—*Pearls Before Swine* and *Mean Talkin'*. Biff from BROWN SUGAR plays bass and the reason I mention that is because this band shares sonic similarities with that one. It's a frenetic punk sound, much of it delivered at a thrashy clip, along with the occasional garage-y excursion. Josh Smith (ex-WHITE GUILT) has a higher-timbred ranty vocal style and you can't make out the words all that well but it adds an engaging nervousness to the proceedings. Something like that. Biff's bass-lines are monstrous, especially the underwater (?)-sounding effects on "Forgiveness." A good start for these guys. (Feral Kid, feralkidrecords.com)

WORMS are a Western Mass. band who most certainly spent a lot of time listening to DINOSAUR, JR—the Mascis-inspired guitar leads that pop up from the time to time make that an inescapable conclusion. This isn't a mere copy, though. Engaging, hooky melody lines and with subtle shadings, but always accompanied by a brute forcefulness that never wavers. These guys started life under the name WHIRL, but changed their name earlier this year (another Whirl threatened legal action if they didn't) and this is their second full-length album. It's a dense thundercloud of heavy riffage and plowing bass that would have fit in well with the early '90s Amphetamine Reptile bands—yes, there's that comparison again but it's accurate, particularly for "Gun," driven by a relentless bass line and then overlaid with howling vocals and noise-stun guitar. "Ice Skater" draws the album to a more sedate close, both musically and vocally, quiet after the storm, I suppose. Even with the slightly less electrifying conclusion, this is still a formidable, ear-grabbing and head-messing effort. (57 Amherst Road, Pelham, MA 01002, Last Watt/Darkworld, www.darkworld.bandcamp.com)

GREEN BERET returns with a scorching new 7", *The Cult of State*. For those of you who haven't heard of these guys yet, it's a collaboration between Matt Smith and Ryan Abbott (they play/have splayed in such bands as MISSIONARY, SOCIAL CIRCKLE, EXIT ORDER and many others—they handle everything in the studio and have a full band for live shows. Rampaging D-beat hardcore driven by

Ryan's always-kickass drumming and lots of burn. Not blown-out sounding—the sound is cleaner but no less lethal. (Side Two, 6 Wadleigh Pl., Boston, MA 02127, sidextwo@gmail.com)

Austin band GLUE's demo has been pressed onto a 7". Harris's harsh, throaty vocals remind me of Aaron from the REPOS and they have a blistering hardcore punk sound. The attitude on the lyric sheet is summed up perfectly: "I DON'T GIVE A FUCK WHAT YOU THINK!" "Close But No Cigar" borrows the riff progression from the GERMS' "We Must Bleed," "Peer Evaluation" and "The Jokes Write Themselves" are both mid-tempo boot stompers. These guys were a blast live and it translates well here. (Lagerville, lagervillerecords.wordpress.com)

DIE also have a bare-knuckled hardcore punk sound for their self-titled EP and the attitude is summed up nicely on the opening track "Life Is Hate." You can hear some Boston hardcore influences on a few of these tracks, but there are also dark and frayed guitar lines to give it an added dimension. The damage comes out most boldly for the dirge-y "No Vision." (Sonic Terror Discs, diecunt.bandcamp.com)

CELLOS are from Windsor, ON and, despite their name, there ain't no cellos on their *Standard and Poor* three song 7". Just guitars. White hot screaming guitars. I stole that from Lester Bangs when he was reviewing BLUE ÖYSTER CULT (I admit to my thievery). A muscular rock sound weaned on late '80s/early '90s heavy hitters. That means it's hard and heavy without being metal. (Doormat, www.drawingroomrecords.com)

Finally, I got a pair of records from the Hungarian label Permaculture. NORMS (with *MRR* columnist Viktor Vargyai) offer crazed, off-kilter hardcore on their five song 7". An ugly, noise-drenched cacophony that grabs my attention, but not always in a positive way. They also massacre BEAT HAPPENING's "Hey Day" and I'm afraid that Viktor's crooning is scaring the neighborhood dogs. Or probably would if they ever heard it. Come to think of it, maybe that's a good way to keep one of 'em, Kingston, from pooping on the front lawn. Meanwhile, BOMBER's 7", *Turn off the Lights*, has a melodic street-punk sound—brawny, yet heartfelt, with hearty backup vocals on the chorus. OK, but nothing all that spectacular. "Turn off the Looks" does have a halfway decent chorus hook. (Permaculture, permaculture.bandcamp.com)

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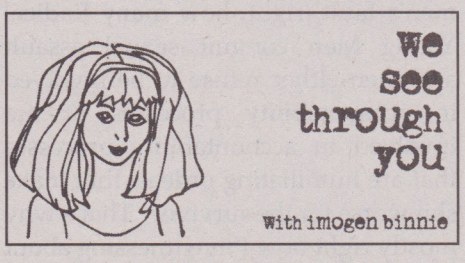


Hey *Maximum*. I always feel like kind of a hippie talking about this kind of thing here, like I should be more of a nihilist hater punker or whatever, but I'm writing this on New Year's Eve at the end of 2013, and I feel like I need to tell you: I think I've found religion.

Now look, hear me out. I'm not going to spend the rest of this column trying to convert you. Well, I am, but not in, like, a bossy Jesus enthusiast way. It just feels like this is Good News you need to hear.

I don't remember if I've written about this here before—I know I've tried, but I feel like it's a complicated subject and usually I start rambling, getting off-topic, losing track of what I'm trying to say, scrapping the whole column and then writing about how being cool isn't cool. But I think a lot about the ways those of us in positions of privilege (white people, cis people, middle class people, you know what I mean) internalize oppressive paradigms, and then like, even if we can talk hella talk about anti-oppression principles and radical politics and stuff, most of the time we still do a shitty job of walking any kind of walk on that stuff. Like how many trans guys have this language down and then perpetuate queer spaces where trans women feel like shit every time we try to enter them? How many white people hang signs in their show spaces that are like "leave your racism, sexism, homophobia etc. outside," but then the bands that come and play there make racist jokes onstage? Of course it plays out more subtly, too. Those of us with privilege have tendency to talk about that privilege as if saying it out loud somehow defuses it. But it doesn't. Acknowledging a privilege doesn't absolve you of it.

That catchphrase around this stuff is "my feminism will be intersectional or it will be bullshit," but what a lot of us are missing—again, specifically with regard to privileges from which we benefit—is that calling your feminism intersectional doesn't automatically make it not bullshit.

Basically, at the end of the eighties Kimberlé Crenshaw pointed out that black women don't experience gendered oppression in a way that's separate from, and unrelated to, oppression based on race, but that those things complicate each other; that it's even more complicated than that, that "The main highway is 'racism road'. One cross street can be Colonialism, then Patriarchy Street." This was a super insightful way of articulating this point and that's where the term intersectionality came from, as far as I can tell.

Uh, I'm a white lady, so I'm not the boss of this stuff. I'm not claiming to understand, or be able to explain, what happened next better than anyone else. (Stop reading this right now and go pirate a pdf of *This Bridge Called My Back* on the internet. Then read bell hooks. Trust me.) But like, basically white people took this idea and turned it into a way to be mean to each other and to build hierarchies of legitimacy from which to tell each other to shut up? I mean, part of it is that this is just the way that conversation happens on the internet: everybody just yells at everybody else all the time. But part of it also is that white people are used to seeing a thing, going "oh yeah, I

get that," and then just assuming it's ours. But the other part of it is that privileged people like us approach everything we see with the same sense of entitlement—a pattern that's been in place our whole lives—we've always approached everything. It's colonialism and gentrification and cultural appropriation.

It's like that thing where white dudes who know about bands are stoked to just explain about bands forever at women just because women can't stop them. I was in the bookstore the other night and this guy was going on and on about Stephen King and Amy Tan's band the Rock Bottom Remainders at this woman who seemed to be his wife, who was just kind of nodding and ignoring him. Then later I went to Target where this white twelve year old boy was explaining to his mom about this band Deadmau5, where they wear giant mouse heads on their heads. And I was like, man, I haven't listened to anything except recordings of my own bands and Deafheaven for the last ten years but even I know just from reading the cover of *Rolling Stone* when it's in front of me that that band Deadmau5 is just one dude, it's not even a band, he's just like some skinny dude with Zelda tattoos and a mouse hat. That kid in Target is being bossy about something he's hella misinformed about and nobody's gonna call him on it and that's what the rest of his life is going to be like.

You are probably familiar with this phenomenon.

Look, we all do that. Look at me talking about womanism (which, if you did not know, is not dissimilar to feminism except explicitly centering blackness, since feminism as we know it tends to center whiteness) as if I were in a place to tell you about it. Cis people are used to being able to say and do whatever they want when they talk about trans experiences, because who's gonna make them shut up. Men get away with saying fucked up shit about women all the time. It's just the way the world works. *It's that same shit*, people who are privileged along one axis always feel entitled to an understanding (which absolves them of responsibility) about the oppression they're perpetuating.

So like, you've got all these white people who are great at articulating their oppression as queer people and their oppression along class lines and as grey asexual people and are happy to talk your ear off about the way they suffer as introverts who say—and, more importantly, do—racist shit all the time. And then refuse to fucking apologize for it? Or like, okay, it's not just white people's fault, it's also men's fault, right, how many Radical Young Men commit sexual assault and then either refuse to be involved in accountability processes or are involved in accountability processes that are humiliating ordeals that make shit worse for the survivor? That's why mostly right now I'm witnessing about my new religion to white people and to men. Listen up. Hallelujah.

There's language and there's action. It seems like right now we're stoked on these really good tools we have for describing our positionality and the relationship between our own locationality and the locationalities of others, but like, look, most of us in places of privilege are fucking terrible at doing anything with that information besides replicating the oppressions we're doing our best to acknowledge and, theoretically, to check ourselves on.

In other words I'm way less interested in what you are than I am in what you do.

My religion might be able to help with this problem. It's called Wyld Stallyns.

Wyld Stallyns is a band made up of Bill S. Preston, Esquire, "Ted" Theodore Logan, Princess Joanna and Princess Elizabeth from the movies *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* and *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey*. In the movies, Bill and Ted travel to the future, where a utopian society has come into existence based on the music and philosophy of Wyld Stallyns. In the utopian Wyld Stallyns future, people of color are in positions of authority on what appears to be a relatively anti-hierarchical legislating council located in a mysterious cave or something. They've figured out motherfucking time travel! Unlike the Behaviorist dystopia-in-disguise that fictional utopias always seem to end up being, the Wyld Stallyns future legitimately rules.

And here's the thing: as far as I can tell there's only one tenet to the religion. All you have to remember is this: be excellent to each other.

Be excellent to each other.

That's what we're missing, you guys. Those of us coming from a place of privilege and trying to absolve ourselves of it via politics, we're a bunch of smug assholes telling each other to shut up all the time, judging each other for having politics that aren't as on point as our own, strutting around replicating the oppressions we grew up benefitting from. White people appropriating womanist frameworks for our own familiar and noxious ends. Cis people all being like, "I don't know how I'm supposed to remember your new pronoun." People who don't do sex work making jokes about whores as if whores weren't some of the best people in their communities! That shit is the opposite of being excellent to each other. Same with doing a lot of deep thinking about oppressions that you experience, without thinking very much at all about oppressions you might be perpetuating; trans men being all "man we're cool" at the expense of the lives of trans women is a pretty obvious example of this. Or like, the lip service everyone who is not a trans woman of color always seems to pay to trans women of color, tacking on what has become all but a meaningless platitude, "especially trans women of color" to everything they say, without ever actually doing anything in the interest of trans women of color. That's paying lip service to intersectionality, not being excellent!

Because here's the thing: it's *be excellent* to each other. Being excellent is about action, doing excellent things. It's not "write excellently on tumblr."

It's not "have an excellent identity." Fucking *do* something excellent. Have somebody else's back. Think in advance not about what you want, but about what somebody else—somebody different from you—might want, or even need. Being excellent is a thing that you do! And, in fact, it is a thing that you can do which is deeply informed by the things you are and the things you know about the things you and other people are. It's not separate from the analysis of identity we're so caught up in—it's the next step.

As far as I can tell there's only one hymn in the Wyld Stallyns religion. It's called "God Gave Rock & Roll To You II"—it's performed by Kiss and Steve Vai at the end of *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey*, after Death, unfortunately, raps. Or maybe before. I forget the order. I was living in San Francisco for a couple months at the Tranwich, where Baby, Geyl, Annie and I all watched *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey* at a little going away party for me that I forgot to invite anybody to. It was awesome; we drank hell of Cloverfields (which are the new name of that drink the Irish Car Bomb because real people die in Irish car bombs and That's Not Funny; pass it on) and ate hell of nachos. The next day me and Annie Danger, famous queer performer and tattoo artist to the stars, were in the living room all day and I forget what she was doing but I was working on this novel about Nirvana that I've been working on and we just could not stop bursting into "God Gave Rock & Roll To You II" or playing the video on youtube, just like, over and over and over.

That's what you want from a hymn! Something you can't stop yelling. Some of the lyrics are like "Do you know what you want? You don't know for sure," and "you don't have money or a fancy car and you're tired of wishing on a falling star; you've got to put your faith in a loud guitar," and "God gave rock and roll to you! Put it in the soul of everyone!" I think it was originally written by a Christian rock band, the point is that Wyld Stallyns is for everyone. It's about rocking, which is basically the same as partying, like, in the Andrew W.K. sense: being fucking excellent to each other. If I had any money, I'd get a huge fuck-off *be excellent to each other* tattoo on my forearm or neck—how rad would it be to get it in one of those designs that's the same backwards and forwards, so I could read it in the mirror and you could read it when you looked at me?—but I'm broke and I still owe Annie money for this tattoo I just got on my thigh of the cover of *No Heroes*, that Converge album. That cool bird. You know.

I mean I know being excellent to each other isn't going to solve everything. But yelling at each other and building hierarchies of legitimacy, unintentionally perpetuating our own privileges hasn't fixed it either—and we've been doing that shit for fucking centuries. Taking a language of resistance and using it to perpetuate those same patterns is not actually a solution so look man, maybe Wyld Stallyns is.

Uh, my band Correspondences is playing Smash it Dead Fest in Boston, I think at the end of March, if you want to come and talk to me about it. Or email me at imogen@keepyourbridgesburning.com. And my other band Tall Girl just put out a tape! Which you can download for free at tallgirl.bandcamp.com. Also I still have a book out, it's called *Nevada*. It's pretty good.

"Holy shit," I exclaim to Elena, as we make our way along the Long Island Expressway (LIE) to her parents place in Stony Brook, "this fucking stereo does play MP3s. Now I'm sort of bummed."

"Why?" asks Elena, who is half asleep in the passenger seat. After all, it's *way* past her bedtime. I had decided that we'd make her way to her parents place in the middle of the night to avoid the Thanksgiving Day traffic.

Which is usually bumper to bumper.

For fifty miles.

Do'h.

"Because I thought I was burning it as a regular CD, but it's playing MP3s, and so I could have fit like at least twenty albums on the damn disc," I explain.

"Of course it plays MP3s. What? You think this is still The Dark Ages? It's 2013!" she exclaims, now fully awake.

I think about that. 2013. I had owned a car about ten years ago – and come to think of it, maybe it did play mp3s. But the one before that one didn't

Hell, it didn't even play CDs. Or cassettes, if one knows what those were. No. It played 8-Track Tapes. Music that came in carts bigger than a Nintendo 64 game.

Probably hopeless for anyone to remember those, either.

Anyway, as I thought about how long it was since I had my "Wicked Datsun" (now called "Lame Nisson") and my green VW bug, I began to freak out.

It had been about thirty years.

I tell the this to Elena, who is telling our Yorkie, strapped into the backseat in his carry-bag, that we are almost "at Grandma's and Grampa's".

Of course Jett understands every word he says because he is the smartest ten pound Yorkshire Terrorist/French Bulldog there is.

Well, when he's not sleeping, or waking up and trying to bite my nipples off, or spinning around in circles waiting for food, or pissing on my friends and neighbor's carpets.

Yes sir. High IQ that one. I bet it's as high as his weight.

Ten.

"So that long," I finsh saying as Elena is telling Jett how "Grandma and Grampa" love him and the he is their "Furfaced Grandson".

"What is so long?" Elena asks me.

I feel like telling her my fucking dick, but she knows that already. So I tell her that it's been, well, almost twenty years since we last did a really fun/stupid show in Long Island.

"Stupid?" she asks as Jett starts to whimper. He can tell we are off the highway and traveling slower, which means he'll be somewhere with *food* soon.

"You tell me...."

***

"Yeah, all right, hit me!" screams Mikie from the back seat of Evan's dad's car.

We all just roll our eyes and try to ignore him. Mikie hadn't shut up since he got in the car.

"What town are we playing again?" asks Matt, who, along with Mikie, is the other member of Dick Army. The band who is joining Furious George on the bill that day.

"Calamityville," mumbled Evan, bass player of Furious George, from behind his Ray-Bans and wearing his Judas Priest shirt.

"Yeah, all right, hit me!" screams Mikie, "That town rocks! That's where they made that movie!"

Michael, our drummer, turns up the car stereo.

I looked over at Matt, and he just shruggs his shoulders.

I first met Mikie at my cousin's apartment party, where he had the words "The Champ" painted on his chest. I was convinced he was the taxi-driver guy from those viral commercials on MTV, a channel that used to show music videos, but found out he wasn't that guy. I found him amusing that night. But not today. It was too hot.

"Are we there yet?" screams Mikie as we inched our way along the LIE, just into Forest Hills.

I just look at him. With his straight dyed black hair, Italian designer glasses, cut off t-shirt which has the Heaven's Gate logo on the front, and "My parents followed the Hall-Bot Comet, and all I got was this lousy t-shirt" on the back, and his short shorts. I could see his hairy stomach and the beginning of his pubic mound.

"Is he like this all the time?" asks Michael, drummer for Furious George, turning the stereo down a bit.

"Hey," screams Mikie, "You're turning down little Kim! Lick my pussy, come on, yeah, all right, hit me!"

We all laugh a bit. Then Mikie does too. He sounds like a horse with terrible asthma. Punk Rock.

***

We eventually find the club, Crawdaddys, and park behind it. As we walk into the empty heavy metal bar, Rob Noxious, bass player from Dick Army approachs me.

"They upped the cover," he tells me.

"Really?" I ask.

"Really," he says.

I approach what appears to be the doorman/bouncer, and ask him what was going on. He bears a striking resemblance to Gene Simmons. Without the make-up that saves him from looking like an Israeli neanderthal.

"We had to up the door price," explains Gene Simmons, in his black-biker boots and metal shin-guards, "we heard you wanted to get paid."

"Um," I stutter, "errr, yeah, that would be nice."

"Yeah," explains Gene Simmons, "most bands that play here don't expect to get paid. But I hear you guys think you are somebody or something."

He sounds exactly like Andrew Dice Clay.

With Gene Simmons body.

"Whatever," I say, and then introduce myself.

It turns out the guy's name is Jake, and he had been called in at the last moment to work the show. He says the club didn't know about the show until the night before now, and the kid who was running it hasn't really been in touch at all.

A great start to a wonderful evening, I'm sure.

***

The first band, the Striped Bastards, take the stage, and begin their set. They play good punky-thrash, and all eight audience members like them.

Well, six of them, anyway. Two of the audience members, teenage girls, are busy talking with the bartender. And making Elsa The Cow eyes at him.

***

Next up is Dick Army. Mikie sets up the drums while Matt helps me set up my amp. I try tuning Matt's guitar for him, but gives up halfway through because each string is wound on in a different direction. When I ask him why the guitar was strung that way, he tells me it isn't his, it is some chick's.

Dick Army do their usual awesome set, playing all the hits. They rock like crazy in front of the ten audience members, two of whom were now kind of holding hands with the bartender, while staring at his tight jeans. Mikie keeps yelling "Hit me, all right, yeah!" from the stage. We all laugh.

***

Next up are the Suave Swine. Paul, the drummer from the band, is the one who booked the show. Sometime during the Striped Bastard's set, he tells me he is sorry no one is there, and that he has given out at least 25 fliers at shows.

I tell him it must have been the heat.

As the Suave Swine take the stage, and the lead singer comes out wearing Misfits make up. They play an amusing set of punk, and I kind of like them.

For about ten minutes.

And twenty minutes.

After about a half hour, I find myself outside talking to Gene Simmons with Evan.

"I've seen all the Priest shows since eighty-eight," says Gene, pointing at Evan's t-shirt.

Evan just nodds his head.

"I've seen lots of metal. I love metal," he explains.

I tell him it is kind of obvious, what with the black clothes, spikes on almost every part of his body, and spandex pants that show off what must be a hothouse cucumber.

"You like Slayer?" I ask him, cause I love Slayer.

"Fuckin' Slayer rock!" is his answer, "I saw them tear up the fuckin' Garden, that was one fuck of a show!"

I tell him that I too was at the "Monsters of Rock" show, where Slayer

drove the kids to tear out seat pads, and throw M-80's at one another.

"That show was funny, wanna know why?" Gene Simmons asks Evan and I.

We ask him why in unison.

He explains to us that his friend, who took him to see the Grateful Dead, joined him at the Slayer show.

"It was fuckin' great," explains Gene Simmons, "he was a little jewboy, and they threw him over the rails! The penny-pincher didn't know what to expect, and he got that!"

Evan and I, look at each other's Jewish noses, then laugh politely.

"Hey," I ask Gene Simmons, wanting to change the subject as quickly as possible, "Ya know where the Amityville Horror House is?"

"Funny you should ask that," says Gene Simmons, "cause I'm gonna tell you. I'm not supposed to tell anyone, it's the big town secret, but I'll tell you, because you seem so cool."

I thank the guy for the compliment. I think.

"It's up the street, at the next light. That's Ocean Avenue. Make a right, and it's about three blocks up. If ya can't find it, just stop in at the pizza joint up near there and tell them to tell ya where it is. Tell the pizza guys Jake sent ya."

I tell him I will, and thank him again.

Then Evan and I go inside and wait for the Suave Swine to finish. Three minutes later Gene Simmons walks inside and hands me a Quarter Pounder from a bag full of McDonalds food. I give it back to him, but thank him anyway.

"See?" he says, "Who's taking care of ya? I am!"

I begin to really like the guy, spikes, spandex, cucumber and all.

Finally Paul's band finishes playing and it's our turn. There are now eight audience members in attendance. The bartender, and the two teenage girls seem to be missing in action.

***

We set up our stuff, and then, in a brilliant move I stole from seeing Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten's' next band, PIL at The Ritz about zillion years ago, when dinosaurs walked the earth: I set up our banner in *front* of the band.

We then play our set.

From behind it.

No one can see us.

And we can't see anyone. Every once in a while a camera attached to some hands slips under the banner by our feet, and a flash goes off.

We do our whole set looking at yellow fabric.

And we do it well. Since we can't see that we are playing to eight people, we play with real gusto enthusiasm.

It's when we remove the banner after the set and find out there are only four people left, that we get a little bummed. But Gene Simmons tells us we rule, and we are welcome back anytime. He tells us we were real good metal!

I guess it was the Satan voice I was singing with.

***

Out in the parking lot behind the club we are handed ten dollars from Paul. He tells us that is all the money the bands made all together, and that we can have it. We thank him. Sincerely.

As we load Evan's dad's car with what little equipment we have, Mikie starts in.

"Yeah, all right, hit me!" he screams, "Ya know George, they threw me out of the club because they said I was too wild! Hit me! Woo! But they really like me!"

I tell Mikie that they really like him.

He tells me he knows they do. Then he sees Erica, Dave our roadie's sister. She is sixteen, very tiny, very cute, and we are all very over-protective of her to the point she gets annoyed.

"Hey mama," says Mikie, "Hit me! Woo! Haven't I seen you along the West Side Highway?" (it is now "West Street", and no longer littered with prostitutes)

"Shut-up," says Erica, in that sixteen year old way, accenting the "up."

"Woo, hit me," yells Mikie, "You have cute legs, baby," he says to her. Erica is wearing a short punk rock leopard print skirt.

"Ewwww," says Erica, then hides behind me for protection against Mikie.

"Hit me, mama!", wails Mikie, "I know you, don't I? I know you from The West Side Highway. I know you from the back of your head! Hit me! Woo! All right!"

"Ewwww," screams Erica, "Leave me alone, you creep!"

"Shut-up Mikie," says Dave, our roadie, "You are disgusting.

Suddenly we all start to yell at Mikie, and he starts yelling back.

"Why doesn't anyone like me?" he yells.

"Pull up your pants," says Erica, who, like everyone else, can see Mikie's stomach hair and pubic mound.

"You want some, pretty momma, huh?", screams Mikie, "hit me, yeah!"

At that point the conversation turns to leaving Mikie in Amityville, and suddenly he quiets down very quickly.

***

Eventually we leave the club, and say our good-byes to everyone. We leave Dave and Erica sitting on a bench along the road waiting for their dad to pick them up.

We travel up to the nearest light and make a right. Then we go about three blocks up, and we see it. Or what we think is it. The Amityville Horror House.

"That house looks like the house in the movie," screams Mikie from the back seat, "Hit me, woo, yeah!"

We tell Mikie we think it is the house, but are not sure.

"That's it I tell you," screams Mikie, "that's where they filmed that damn movie!"

We start to explain to Mikie that the movie is based on a real story when suddenly we hear a voice saying "Get Out! Get Out!"

Evan and I look at each other. Scared shitless.

Then we hear the voices say, "Go home. Leave us alone!"

We look outside the car to the left, and see a bunch of old ladies yelling

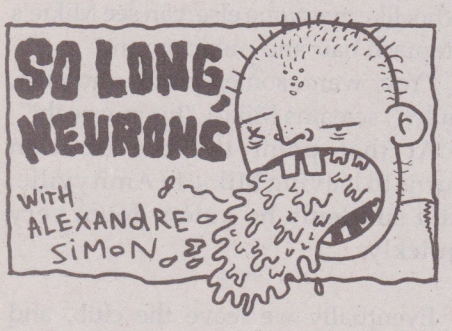
at us to leave their neighborhood. They probably see our Jersey plates and know we are sight seeing.

"Well hit me, all right! Yeah!" screams Mikie at them. And then we drive away.

On our trip back to Manhattan, we almost lose Mikie twice. Once at a McDonalds, and once on the LIE. But we have no such luck.

The next night Dick Army plays at Continental and I go see them. Mikie yells, "Hey George, all right, yeah, hit me!" and I smile. For some reason, during the past twenty four hours, I think I missed him. Hit me. Yeah. Well all right!

Take My Life, Please.



Last month I interviewed Abraham Diaz, a cartoonist/comic artist from Mexico City. At the end of the interview, I asked him to ask me a question I'd answer next month—and since next month has arrived, here's what he asked again, for those of you too poor to pick this mag every time it comes out (sometimes seems like there's a new issue of this thing every week, I know).

"I think you might find this question a little dumb, but who cares... By knowing you run that Punk Drawings blog, I would like to ask... Do you think punk "art" is as important as music? I mean, I have the feeling that art in punk is sometimes some kind of taboo, something that shouldn't be called like that or something, something that goes along with records or fanzines. Do you think punk art can be punk as itself? Does it matter? As I'm not the kind of punk who has the minimum of music abilities and I don't know as much punk music as the rest of the punks I know, the "need for expression" is the only thing left for me. Am I punk yet?"

So, my short reply is: yes, art is as important as music. My slightly longer reply is that yeah, the word "art" can sometimes feel like some kind of taboo, especially in punk circles. I think the reason why is that the people who call themselves "artists" without blinking or blushing usually are of the self-absorbed art students variety, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't "reclaim the word"—after all, it is a bit like the word "punk," just because the Exploited or the Black Lips or NOFX or Lady Gaga made it theirs doesn't mean it shouldn't be ours too, right? At the end of the day, who cares anyway, but... I find it rather interesting when people who spend all their free time obsessing over music or comics or movies say they aren't "interested in art"—it seems that for some people the word "art" can only refer to some decrepit old thing in a museum, if you know what I mean. The way I see it, any music or drawing or writing is a form of art and I think one of the first thing the punk "movement" reclaimed was that anyone could be an artist if they decided so. On a personal note, lately I've been more interested in drawings and writing than in music and as much as I don't give a flying fuck if that is "punk" or not, for the sake of this column I'd say it is.

Anyway, I wanted to write more about this but since I devoted all my free time to picking my nose, and this month being the "Year-end top ten" issue, here are some records I liked in 2013—in alphabetical order.

ANXIETY ATTACK – "Ruins" EP (Build Me A Bomb)

These Frenchies—from Lille, a city built entirely of bricks—came up with a great little hardcore 7" which evokes early AGNOSTIC FRONT as much as it does early REPROACH in that gnarly, frantic and street-smart way not many bands from this sad country are capable of.

AUSMUTEANTS – "100 Ausmuteants Fans Can't Be Wrong... 100,000,000 Bon Jovi Fans Can" EP (Anti Fade)

The feel-good, let's-be-dumb, not-give-a-fuck band of the year—perfect synth driven, SPITS influenced punk songs with a healthy dose of modern poetry (the title) thrown in for good measure. I wish I could find a free download of the album that I didn't hear yet and won't buy since postage is such a pain these days.

CHAIN LETTERS – "Bad Reflection" EP (Pogo Time)

Despite the band saying they play punked up new wave and citing BLONDIE as an influence, I say they sound like the ROYAL HEADACHE 7" with Penelope Houston singing instead of that tall white guy with a blonde afro. Two perfect songs on this 7" with the A-side being the catchiest, as it should be, and the band not seeming in a rush to come up with more, as it should be—we all like bands when they die faster, don't we?

DÉFAITE – demo (self-released)

The French punk demo of the year as far as I'm concerned—even if it seems a lot of people prefer the SYNDROME 81 tape (another great current French punk band, but with a rougher edge, sounding like they hang in slightly dirtier bars and live in a messier city, but I digress). Two people from this band (including one of the guitarists and main vocalist) used to play in LEXOMYL, and this demo sounds just like it should based on that fact: a cleaner, better-recorded LEXOMYL, with catchy songs and musicians who can play.

EGO SUMMIT – "The Room Isn't Big Enough" LP (540)

A bunch of adults from urban Ohio put their own egos in huge gluebags, sniffed it and came up with a few songs that defy categorization. Yet they are certainly "punk" in the same way the VELVETS or the MINUTEMEN or VERTICAL SLIT or MIKE REP were "punk", which means outsider music with guitars and guts.

THE FLOOR ABOVE – "Bishop" LP (Savage Quality)

One-man hardcore band sounding like the soundtrack to a horror flick, if said horror wasn't vampires and ghosts but industrial wastelands outta where no one can escape. It's hard to describe

how great this record is—I could throw in names like DIE KREUZEN and MECHT MENSCH and URBAN WASTE and all the usual suspects of "slightly weirder than usual" HC bands, but while that would give you a hint that wouldn't exactly do it justice. If you've been searching for a 2013 hardcore sounding both classic and one of a kind, look no further.

GAS RAG – demo + "Human Rights" EPs (Beach Impediment)

Love the way these yanks took the Swedish approach to hardcore and changed the little details just enough to make it both distinctly their own and distinctly 2013—if that makes any sense.

GOOD THROB – "Culture Vulture" EP (Muscle Horse)

"Culture Vulture" is such a great song, maybe not GOOD THROB's best (the one about the plastic bag on their first 7" beats it, me thinks), but still such a cut above most songs by most bands in 2013. This band sounds like the inept, simple UKDIY bands of the *Messthetics* comps mixed with the nihilistic hate of, say, NO TREND, except that their hatred is aimed at slightly less misanthropic subject matters—and yes, you bet they got something personal against you.

HOAX – LP (self-released)

I will assume I'm not the only one who didn't want to like HOAX. I'll assume even more, that I'm not the only one who gave up resisting after seeing them live and getting his mind bent in the process. As close to a perfect hardcore full-length as there was in 2013, but you all already know this.

PRAG – demo (self-released)

A bunch of Australians (from Perth, not Melbourne, believe it or not) who one will picture loud'n'young'n'snotty'n'maybe with a penchant for horror movies or nights spent in cemeteries—laying what sounds like Euro hardcore played by people who got sick of USHC after hearing the Mexican hardcore of that record label Cintas Pepe, maybe? For fans of KAAOS, NERORGASMO, PIOGGIA NERRA, INSERVIBLES and whistling in punk songs.

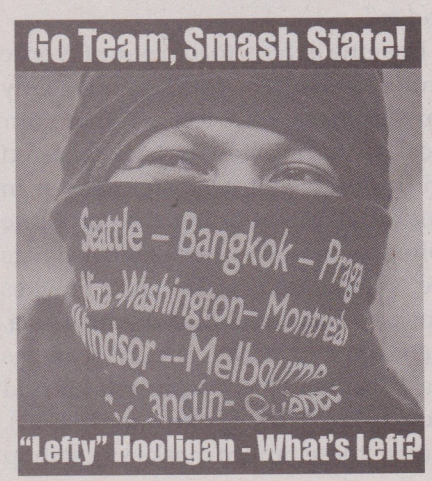
RAW PRAWN – "None Left"EP (RIP Society)

Another light-hearted type band reminding me of early TYVEK or early UV RACE. Featuring a dog with sunglasses on the cover.

YI – "Punk Memories" EP (Self-released)

Fucked up garage punk that first sounds like some kind of TYVEK, fun and light and full of sun and beer, before disintegrating into a strange jam, making it way more surprising than one could expect at first.

Also: BAD NOIDS LP, GRABBIES live 7", VELVET WHIP cassette, MESSRS cassette, everything on Homeless Records, GUILLOTINE, HOAX, HYGIENE and GOOD THROB live, all the things I'm forgetting, etc. Until next time, take it easy and don't forget to eat salad with your burger. (ratcharge@gmail.com if you're lost in France and can't find a good burger joint, btw).



Now, that's marketing.

My wife and I recently went to see a movie at The Kabuki, a local cinema that's now part of the Sundance independent movie theatre chain. The Kabuki is a multiplex in San Francisco's Japantown, with a couple of big auditoriums and several smaller theaters, reserved seating, and food service that includes alcohol in certain over-21 areas. We were there to see *The Book Thief*. Hard to imagine someone making a bit of sentimental smarm out of an anti-Nazi subject, but there you are. Anyway, the building was thronged due to two near-simultaneous showings of the *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*, the second part to the trilogy that tracks with the young adult novel series of the same name. The place was jam-packed with adolescents, mainly teenaged girls, with some of their parental chaperones. I hear that this movie does have appeal to older people. When I was maneuvering through the crowds, headed to and from the bathrooms, I noticed a couple of teen clusters giving each other the film's distinctive assignation, a three-fingered salute touched to the lips and then held out that comes to represent a sign of resistance against the ruling regime in the movie. Along with the four-note tune called "Rue's Whistle Song," and the mockingjay symbol worn by the lead protagonist Katniss Everdeen, these have become symbols in the movie of the failed rebellion against the government. "The odds are *never* in our favor" is the graffiti summing up the film's theme. Talk about the clever marketing of rebellion to an adolescent demographic.

Produced by the studio Color Force and distributed by Lionsgate, they should have taken a page from the folks who market those Guy Fawkes masks. Based on a stylized representation of that English terrorist and folk hero who tried to blow up Parliament in 1605 and was executed for his temerity, Guy Fawkes also became associated with the celebratory bonfires set on November 5th to commemorate what was called the "Gunpowder Plot." Guy Fawkes Night featured grotesque effigies of the man, and soon children used similarly masked effigies to beg for money around Britain. Eventually, cheap cardboard masks of Guy Fawkes were sold for Guy Fawkes Night festivities.

Then came *V for Vendetta*, the graphic novel and the film based on it. The main character in both wears the mask, which is manufactured by Time-Warner as a movie-related product. The initial sightings of the mask's use seem to be somewhat random, beginning with its appearance in a YouTube video connected with "Epic

Fail Guy," a stick figure that fails at everything he/she does. But it soon became associated with protestors hoping to hide their identities, or to make a point. When the hacker group Anonymous adopted it, things took off. Anonymous started using it in their public events and PR releases, and the hacktivist community at large became associated with it. The mask appeared in graffiti and was worn at protests and demonstrations around the world, from Poland and Ukraine to Brazil and Turkey, from various countries involved in the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street actions. *V for Vendetta* novel writer and anarchist Alan Moore has said that he was "quite heartened" by the mask's uses and impact in popular protest, almost like "a character I created 30 years ago has somehow escaped the realm of fiction." Illustrator and co-creator David Lloyd is quoted on *BBC News* (10-20-12):

The Guy Fawkes mask has now become a common brand and a convenient placard to use in protest against tyranny—and I'm happy with people using it, it seems quite unique, an icon of popular culture being used this way. My feeling is the Anonymous group needed an all-purpose image to hide their identity and also symbolise that they stand for individualism—V for Vendetta *is a story about one person against the system. We knew that V was going to be an escapee from a concentration camp where he had been subjected to medical experiments but then I had the idea that in his craziness he would decide to adopt the persona and mission of Guy Fawkes—our great historical revolutionary.*

All the while, the Guy Fawkes mask as marketed by Time-Warner has become a top selling product on Amazon.com. "It's quite ironic, actually. In their attempts to take down large corporations, Anonymous actually pads the pockets of one of them." So reports *Time Magazine* on 8-29-11 ("How Time Warner Profits from the 'Anonymous' Hackers," Nick Carbone). "But there's one unintentional consequence—their disguise is earning big bucks for a major media conglomerate. Warner Brothers, the Time Warner subsidiary who produced the movie, owns the rights to the Guy Fawkes mask—and they earn royalties on every sale." The original *New York Times* article ("Masked Protesters Aid Time Warner's Bottom Line," Nick Bilton, 8-28-11) concurs: "What few people seem to know, though, is that Time Warner, one of the largest media companies in the world and parent of Warner Brothers, owns the rights to the image and is paid a licensing fee with the sale of each mask. [...] Indeed, with the help of Anonymous, the mask has become one of the most popular disguises and—in a small way—has added to the $28 billion in revenue Time Warner accumulated last year. It is the top-selling mask on Amazon.com, beating out masks of Batman, Harry Potter and Darth Vader."

Imagine itching to join your favorite protest wearing your trendy Guy Fawkes mask, only to learn that your local costume shop is back ordered until Monday. Stores can't keep it in stock. Balking at lining the corporate coffers of Time-Warner, some activists are even having *faux* Guy Fawkes masks mass produced in Asia, according to *CNN* ("Guy Fawkes mask inspires Occupy protests around the world," Nick Thompson, 11-5-11). But are these replica masks sweatshop free?

I'm sure glad some enterprising group of anarchists hadn't managed to copyright, trademark and then market the anarchy symbol.

Thomas Pynchon wrote about a conflict between two secret, underground mail services in his uncharacteristically slim novel *The Crying of Lot 49*. Thurn and Taxis, once an actual 18th century postal system, is at war with the fictitious Trystero/Tristero, which is symbolized by a muted post horn that surfaces at odd moments and locations throughout the work. Every time the Trystero post horn appears, the book's main character, and indeed the reader, senses that something conspiratorially mysterious, and perhaps entirely wonderful is about to be revealed.

That's akin to how I felt, growing up, when I saw the circle A symbol. An anarchist myself, I felt a part of some covert movement, some exotic liberation struggle, whenever I encountered the circle A scrawled as graffiti in public. It was extremely rare in the 1960s and '70s and, as such, highly provocative. Your average citizen had no idea what it meant and thought anarchism to be synonymous with chaos and destruction. Most folks versed in politics didn't have a clue either, with the exception of a few highly cognizant individuals—left, right and center—who almost universally denounced anarchism as hopelessly idealistic, if not outright dangerous. The Left back in the day, specifically hardcore Marxist-Leninists, utterly disdained the politics and people behind the symbol. I felt smug, an insider, someone in the know, part of a conscious elect out to change the world whenever I came upon the circle A symbol.

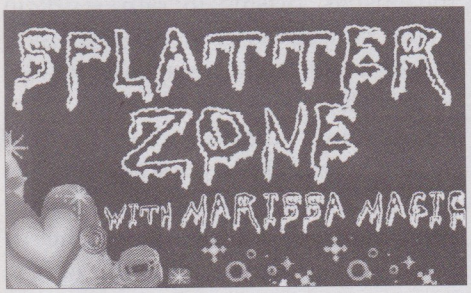
Today, of course, the circle A is ubiquitous. There are literally scores of businesses and consumer products sporting the circle A as part of their logos or marketing strategies. Elements of the ML Left, discredited by the practice of "real existing socialism" throughout the 20th century, now take anarchism seriously, if only for the purpose of recruiting, but often ideologically in formulating a "leaderless Leninism." People versed in mainstream politics are also familiar with what the circle A symbol means, with certain libertarians even describing themselves as anarchist capitalists (*see my last column*). And the general public is also well aware of the circle A—spray painted as it is on virtually every wall, building and sidewalk in most urban areas—if not the symbol's implications. Thanks to the bullshit perpetrated by certain tendencies of anarchism in the Occupy movement,

most people consider anarchists to be anything from childish idiots to inept wanna-be terrorists. Me, I now cringe whenever I see a circle A.

I no longer call myself an anarchist, or left communist, as readers of this column are well aware, and for reasons other than current events. But the sheer amentia of anarchism's insurrectionary vanguard, responsible for the smashy smashy excesses of Occupy Oakland, would have gone a long way toward driving me out of anti-authoritarian politics. The so-called strategy of these insurrectionists amounts to fucking shit up 24/7, a pathetic excuse for politics, or in this case, anti-politics. Symptomatic of the ideological exhaustion and decay of our time, a consequence of multinational capitalism's global triumph, anarchism's insurrectionary dead end now can't give away ice cream in hell, let alone convince radicals that the anarchy symbol amounts to shit.

Now, that's anti-marketing.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.



THE YEAR OF LOST MINDS

Really, if you've stayed tuned at all this year, you probably know all of these things already because I got so into just getting way TMI on this thing—giving up on the total opinions and identity politics and got real into talking about myself. Did I already say this? Does anybody care? Is this thing on? (Seriously why do people even read this? its like a train wreck of self-indulgence.) Anyway, 2013 was a year of firsts and overarching fun times rather than things quantifiable. I'm 31 and in some ways this year felt like a coming of age story. But I think it's too late for Saturn returns—supposedly that happened three years ago. We (Stillsuit) started the summer with pressing our own record. This process was grueling, but in the end we were left with a beautiful artifact of this thing we spend so much time working on. I was turning 31 in May and there were 31 days so I had this really common idea to do something I had never done before every day. That shit crashed and burned. It all quickly collapsed under the weight of recording, mixing and art making for this one really huge thing I never done. Maybe it evens out.

We had a record and then immediately clown car-ed into a van with the ever excellent Death Drive and went on a month long tour—up through the Northwest, across the top, down the East Coast, bumped back up through the Midwest (we were avoiding Texas) and then dropped down through the Southwest. None of the shows were terrible and the ones that threatened to be were so absurd that they instead existed as good stories. I was home for a mere two weeks when I left again with Wet Drag. We had started playing together in January on the heels of Uzi Rash breaking up and managed to put together a 7", a tape, and a tour amidst our heavy schedules with other projects. I went off medication and back on. I fell deep in love and tried to make fantasies into realities and consequently got my heart broken (that's what makes this gumbo so delicious). Pinky Swear started playing shows and out of the ashes of Wet Drag rose the Blues. There were all these shows and bands and records, but I don't feel like talking about it—and there is enough in this issue in that style to tide you over, I'm sure. I didn't make a top ten because really I spent most of the year listening to Whitney Houston and Roky Erickson.

I tried to write this column at the stroke of midnight on New Years Eve because I was obsessing about my actions at that time—setting a precedent for the rest of the year—but it got weird. Here's some of what I wrote on New Year's anyway: I had a bunch of parties to go to that I didn't give a shit about. I went to one for a while, but I felt invisible. I kept waiting for someone to be excited to see. Be fucking pumped. I wanted someone to make me feel special. Everyone loved each other. I was like whatever. There was a constellation of parties like this that I could go to. Things I didn't really care about, people I kinda knew, but people so in love with each other. I wasn't that. I never was. I make more sense alone. 2013 was an incredible year. I achieved a shit ton and had sooo much fun even the painful parts were the greater style of pain—the style of heartbreak. The knowing I could still feel all of these things, but I could lose myself in fantasy. The only thing that was fucked was my sense of being a loner was shaken. I started doubting. I started feeling like my state of lonerdom was my being a coward, or a weakness, or a failure. I was at these parties looking at all of these people finding comfort and happiness in this circle or whatever. I attach myself to these circles, but they aren't me.

I rode my bike home and it was dark, it was silent. I was one tiny dot, one point going through the city past all of these groups that I'm not a part of, but I know. I went home and I made myself a meal. I'm writing this alone in my room. I'm obsessed with an idea: that whatever I'm doing at midnight is a big deal. I don't wanna be in a room full of people I don't really care for the majority of—bands playing I don't really care about. I want to be alone in my room writing. Does this all sound bitter? It's not. I feel content which is the most elusive feeling. I wanna speed up time. I love the silence. I love the nightlife. In the end it will be

me. After everything it will be me. I ended up alone on New Years Eve in my room and it was the best. Sitting here writing, I look good. Got my pearls on and my tiara and my hair looks good. I'm determined to figure out what being a good person means to me, then being the best I can at that. Am I so desperate to not be alone that I'm willing to act happy and jubilant about mediocre surroundings? I will come out of my cave for things that are fantastic. I will continue to believe in fantasy because that is my first love. Maybe love reality and love fantasy will meet again? If not, that's alright too. "Fuck you clock we're playing a fucking game."

Dear Tooth, last year after the New Years party I went through the house looking for unopened beers and lost drugs and I found a bag of acid which I'm now on. Thanks.

P.S. The new issue of *Deep Suburbia* is out now if you're interested in reading 40+ pages of me rambling about everything, I think there's a drawing in there too. perpetualmagic@gmail.com

More Bois Hard-erection Charade: *MRR* March 2014?

Most of my time is spent sitting at home listening to noise punk records and writing about them to *MRR*. Last month, however, I was forced to spend some time in the real world putting on a punk gig. PEOPLE, you know the Japanese band I talked about at length a few issues ago (as did fellow *MRR* columnist Viktor Vargyai), were in the country for a week's tour and I was tasked with arranging the second London gig in North London—the night after a first gig south of the river. My first choice of venue was Power Lunches bar café and basement venue in Dalston, and luckily the venue was free on the date. This venue is intimate and perfect for smaller gigs in the London DIY HC scene. Upstairs there's seating and a bar to hang out at and talk shit with your friends. Downstairs there's a small basement for pogoing. This is where LOTUS FUCKER played by the way, at a gig that was friendly and violent.

My PEOPLE gig was practically the last day of the year—New Year's Eve don't count—so no one wanted to play and no one really wanted to come either, but this suited me fine as I much prefer to write messages to my friends on the internet about obscure old Japanese hardcore bands instead of actually being in the real world. My idea of punk is Malcolm McLaren as he appears in *The Great Rock'n'roll Swindle*, so the first thing I knew I needed was to go into promotion overkill and carpet bomb the internet and the streets of London with adverting. I am a lazy cunt, so I got Connor from the BISJECTIONS to make a poster for the gig, ripping off the layout of the SWANKYS 1987 tour where all the gigs dates got crossed out as the gigs all got cancelled, just like the SEX PISTOLS' Anarchy tour. Needless to say, the poster looked amazing and we even ended up using it as one of the three PEOPLE tour t-shirts. On Christmas Eve, after work, I went around putting up these on the streets of East London while everywhere around the world nice daily life happy people were eating warm Christmas food with their friends and family singing songs and giving each other presents. I bet the bus drivers seeing the poor guy putting up posters in the rain must have thought, "Does he know it's Christmas time at all?"

I also set up one of those ugly event pages on a popular social network site. Within a few weeks the gig had fifteen confirmed guests. On the morning of the gig, I had twenty confirmed guests. You should not underestimate the power of social networks. Anyway, it was quickly clear that none of the local bands could (or would) play—I asked a bunch of them, but everyone had at least one member away because of the holidays, while some other bands who had been asked prior had declined because there is a fan-made music video of a PEOPLE song with a swastika on one of the popular internet video sites, or something. Luckily, DJ GIMMICK, from the metropolis of Corby up in the extreme north of England, agreed to take the train down to London to play vinyl records, and curiously, I did not have to employ the threat of violence or offer him any money for his hassles. Then I had the brilliant idea to ask Taf if DISORDER, the punk band, would play. For years I've been having this email exchange with Taf about DISORDER playing in London. Typically I'd write and ask when DISORDER would play in London the next time and then Taf would tell me about some gig or other, and I would promise to come. But I would always miss DISORDER for one or several stupid reasons. It's a standing joke. All my friends take the piss out of me for always missing DISORDER. All in all, over the years, I've been to perhaps ten to twelve DISORDER gigs, in different countries, but always somehow managing to fail to see the band play—whether passed out on the floor, sleeping in the toilets, making love outside the venue under the bushes, pissing in rain, stuck in traffic, stuck in a rut, arrested, abused, insulted and a other reasons all related to disorder, chaos and anarchy.

It's funny that in the last five or ten years Taf's DISORDER has become infamous for being a pretty shit band, musically speaking—a sort of ramshackle remnant of the legendary band from the hey-days of punk that we all grew up with. I've heard stories of people thinking they were watching some covers band destroying DISORDER songs when actually it was DISORDER proper playing. That Taf would hire and sack band members on the scale of Mark E. Smith and his band the FALL, with

disastrous effect. You have to think though, that the clue is in the band name, no? Or, to paraphrase Sned, the drummer of non-joke sxe-band THISCLOSE, why would someone people expect DISORDER to have developed into a professional touring band a la EXPLOITED or GBH etc? It's a pretty fucking retarded suggestion, isn't it? Here's the band that pretty much invented container trash living and who personified the punk life style as seen on the streets of Hamburg, Osaka, Göteborg, Portland and Rio. And you come expecting to see session musicians and people with healthy life styles?? Well, anyway Taf said yes, DISORDER could play. He needed the money. Ha! But there's at least one more band added to the gig, at last.

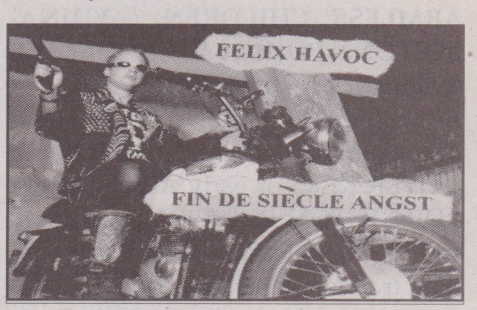
Next up Singo, the singer of PEOPLE, asked me to make a tour CD for the North London gig, and that sounded very much like my kind of thing (more so that putting on stupid punk shows). Characteristically, I only got the songs from the band on the Friday night before the tour started, meaning I had two days to finish everything. The CD is six demo songs from the second LP (recently repressed on Noise Punk Records) including a great shitty cover of the SEX PISTOLS... so I made up some a CD sleeve ripping off the SEX PISTOLS, which then got photocopied at my local newsagent and spent a day burning CDs and folding CD sleeves. That was fun.

Sunday came around with the first south London gig, which was fucking great. PEOPLE were a little late to the venue but came straight off the fifteen hour flight and played an amazing set still wearing their coats and hats and scarves. Punk rock! Early on in the evening I figured I might as well crash the pose and just go and buy a packet of fags. Afterall, this would be two days of seeing my favourite punk band followed by a New Years Eve party. Smoking is gross and I only just quit, but it was great smoking for three days then quitting. Yes, I've since totally quit and have resumed normal life.

The next day, I had been asked if I could fix some food for PEOPLE, as they would require food after a hard day sightseeing at Camden Market before the gig. Of course, More Noize Catering Corporation is always happy to perform. Now, I don't usually do requests, but Filip Fuchs from SEE YOU IN HELL told me that instead of writing another noise punk column I should dedicate the column space to easy receipts on how to cook for touring bands. Well, I made the world famous More Noize Vegan Pasta. Here's what you need: Cauliflower, green olives, parsley, garlic, dried red chillis, pasta (duh) and almonds. This is how you make it: Boil the cauliflower and pasta in water. Hack the green olives, and the parsley, into a messy paste. When the cauliflower is soft, take off the water, place in a large bowl and mix in garlic, chilli and olive oil. Throw in the pasta when it's done, and toss until a proper mess. Then chuck in lots of almonds. Add salt, pepper and more olive oil. Serve with ice-cold beer. Oh and salad (lettuce, tomatoes and cucumbers, seasoned by mixed herbs and olive oil). By all accounts this food went down well with everyone. I wonder if it would be good enough for Filip? Perhaps he can answer in a postcard?

The gig itself was great, too. Turn-up was a bit slow to begin with, but I had revealed on the internet that the first band would only play at 21:00. Before that DJ GIMMICK played swanky tunes while people socialised and got drunk and it was pretty good, overall. Sorry about Jesus who did not get in though for calling the bouncer a cunt. DISORDER played a great set and the audience sang along to most of the songs, including a retarded cover of "Bite it You Scum" by GG ALLIN. PEOPLE smashed the joint and was forced to play three encores. Singo said it was their best gig to date. Success! We recorded both sets so this may be released one day. And financially? I think we got about 35 paying punx at the door and sold about 20 CD-Rs, which pretty much meant I could pay DISORDER and PEOPLE small sums, as well as covering the expenses on beer, food, etc. It was easy, it was fun, it was cheap, now go and fuck yourself.

Don't write me, and I won't write you.



I started out to write my Year End Top Ten with a few piles of records and some lists scrawled on scrap paper. After narrowing it down to the top ten there's still some new and recent releases that stand out but didn't make the cut. I look at a lot of other peoples top ten lists every year and there are usually a handful of high profile releases that make a lot of lists. But further down the list, everyone's list is different. Indeed, I often have never heard of the bands on some people's lists. It's a further demonstration of how diverse hardcore punk has become into scenes and sub-scenes. A good example of this is the increasing lack of releases that make everyone's top tens. There just aren't that many "unity bands" or "must have" releases coming out these days that appeal across genres. I'm not saying that's bad per se, just different. So here's a round up of some more new releases I am into right now.

KOSZMAR – "Jeniec Wojenny" LP (Rust and Machine)

I don't know anything about this band, I just picked it up because the label is known for quality. I was quite surprised to find some top tier rampaging blown out crust core. A lot of bands are playing this style right now, but this record stood out for me. Really solid riffs, scalding vocals. Lyrics are all in Polish but I think they are from Vancouver or Seattle.

CØNDITIØN – "Bombed Out" EP (Rust and Machine)

It took a long time for this band to get any recognition, but it seems like with their recent tour that people are getting into them. Raw blown out hardcore punk mixes early crust like DOOM and SKITSYSTEM with '80s hardcore.

ARMLESS CHILDREN / YDINASEETON POJHOLA – split EP (Nightstick Justice)

ARMLESS CHILDREN play raw and desperate hardcore in the style of SHITLICKERS or early ANTI-CIMEX. YDINSEETON POHJOLA play pretty straight-forward Finnish hardcore with their trademark manic vocals.

ALTERED BOYS – EP (Deranged)

A blast from the recent past. While most bands are going back to 1982 for stylistic inspiration, ALTERED BOYS channel 1982 through 2002. This band delivers sick hardcore that reminds most people of the best of the y2k thrash bands especially TEAR IT UP and DOWN IN FLAMES.

HOAX – LP (self-released)

This band has three 7"s and manages to still deliver a top notch LP. I can really get into this bands heavy, pounding, pummeling hardcore with a bleak atmosphere.

V/A – "Annihilation" LP (Konton Crasher)

A four-way split LP, so basically like four 7"s worth of material on an LP. Features TRUNCHEONS, DISABLE, ASPECTS OF WAR and TOTAL WAR. All these bands are cool, but DISABLE steals the show. No one buys comps these days, so it's arguable if each of these bands would have done better with a 7" on their own. That said, it's nicely done and all the bands are good. I am feeling DISABLE's ramshackle D-beat more than the rest though.

INFERNÖH / EFFLUXUS – split EP (Rust and Machine)

This was a tour 7". Good material from both bands, but great material from INFERNÖH.

CONTRAST ATTITUDE – "Stand Up and Fight Now" EP (Koton Crasher)

Excellent material from this Japanse band that has been going for a while now. The energy and power just leap out of the grooves.

SVART STADHJALP – "Gauvapen" EP (Sista Versen)

This is the demo on vinyl. Raw out of control hardcore punk from Sweden in the early '80s American style. They have two other great 7"s as well.

PERDITION – "Martial Law" EP (Hardcore Survives)

This band is no longer with us, but left this final 7" to remember them by. In my mind PERDITION was the best of the recent crop of NYC bands.

MAAILMANLOPPU – "Musta Ovi" EP (Kämäset Levyt)

This band has a traditional Finnish hardcore sound and pay homage to the "slow burner" found on 80's Finnish hardcore records with this 7".

NERV – "Life?" EP (SMRT)

This Iowa band has a great noisy hardcore sound, sounding at once contemporary and old school. They remind me a bit of bands like DIE KRUEZEN and MECHT MENSCH. I was a little disappointed with them live, but this 7" is top notch, also they have a cassette.

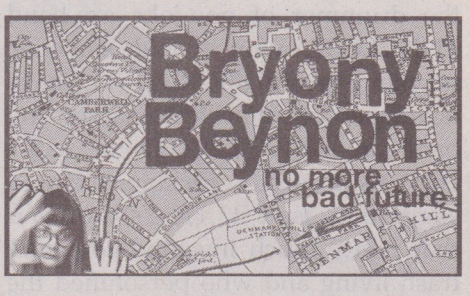
WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET – 12" (Total Fucker)

One thing you'll notice about my top ten of the last few years is that is comprised almost entirely of hardcore. However, around the house I listen to as much punk as hardcore, but always punk from the '70s and '80s. There haven't been too many good punk bands in the last few years. This record got a lot of hype and then a lot of derision, but I don't care what people say—it's straight ahead pogo punk/street punk with some goofy, but punk as fuck lyrics. It's just upbeat and catchy. Stuff like this is a nice counter point to mysterious hardcore bands that get too wrapped up in their own mystique.

PÄÄ KII / LAPINPOLTHAJAT – split EP (Kämäset Levyt)

PÄÄ KII I've written about before, they play melodic Finnish Punk influenced by that nations '70s punk wave. LAPINPOLTHAJAT lean more towards hardcore like APPENDIX and LAMA. Both bands are great on this split.

Some other ill records FRAMTID LP, OBLITERATION EP, SUDOR EP, HARDA TIDER LP, HALSHUG EP



Kiev burns, Damascus implodes, London wilts, fizzles, shifts uneasy, acquits murdering policeman, casts eyes downwards, pays rent, gets on with day.

There is so very much to be terrified of that I've nearly christened the knot in my stomach.

Today yet more useless nausea, a mother's murdered son, a jury that decided lawful killing, structural hatred of unarmed young black male moving through time and space so bolstered by suspicion that the law itself rules said suspicion, unfounded bigotry, as admissible in court. As legal defense. The one non-police witness quietly and without suggestion names what he saw: "An execution." Regime broadcaster names murdered man with two petty convictions as violent gangster, Britain's most wanted. Press release. Go on, press release. The murdering cop returns to active duty with his gun and his "terrible ordeal." A "lawful killing." But this white body does not enter the crosshairs, regardless of analysis of a police force out of control, hatred and suspicion palpable but once-removed because I do not and likely will not know the callous hands of the stop or the frisk. The news cycle moves on and on and soon, guiltily, you know you will post something else. Meme-fying outrage; all will jumble into the ether. Regime broadcaster reports hearsay of rogue anarchist elements teaming up with some of the still-alive "violent gangsters." Their fantasies they start to seem appealing.

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In the interests of consistency I had to wipe my thoughts on Hysterics from

my top ten this year, 'cause their record only technically just began its journey to every crucial bedroom mosh party. It's good to be able to give it a bit more space and time. Transportation effect of how much this thing shreds. With a sound that fuses the early DC spirit and sound of the *Flex Your Head* cohort with the crushing raw speed of Neos and the piss and vinegar of Jerry's Kids into a tornado of well-directed fury, this band is the sweetest antidote, the biggest milkshake in that desert of bullshit; a punk climate too often dulled by unconvincing rent-a-rage. They've undertaken a *Process of Weirding Out* on this second single. It's a total headfuck of acidic riffs and explosive build-ups and breakdowns, and a sonic calling-card for the business they're in: Destruction. Exploding power dynamics through a dry sandblast of heat, expectations cracking under pressure from a sharpened new-old weapon: facetious cynicism. Hardcore. Hang your head in shame. Look up with a pitiful glance and get a slap in the face. The song "Please Sir" takes up nearly half of the entire record, which is still only ten minutes long, pummeling with an unexpected slowed down, rocking headbanger feel. The cumulative effect is one that ensures we all know Hysterics have made good on the massive promises of their first release, a demo buzzing with inchoate rage; having expanded outwards without losing the naturally fuck-you parameter-busting hail of "whatever dickhead" rage.

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Eight things I've enjoyed this month:

- *Me Aburro* – A Spanish language zine, the jist of which filled me with joy. Interviews and drawings.
- First show singing in a hardcore band for seven years. Me and some mates have been on Dregs working on for just over a year, unsurprising revelations: benefits of slowly, slowly approach cannot be underestimated.
- Learning songs inside out so they bend and twist and bounce right back, being comfortable enough around your bandmates that when you're all nervous enough to be unsuccessfully holding back vomit, it's really no big deal.
- Deep-frying.
- Spreading the new gospel: burning bridges with toxic people is important and necessary. Be clear and frank, not rude or angry, rediscover your own terms and watch your horizon turn pink.
- Sleater Kinney – *Dig Me Out* LP. Forever.
- Broken Prayer – self-titled LP

The Village Against the World by Dan Hancox (Verso Press). Communist travel writing done with wit and grace and awe. Lucha y pestiños, Andalusia utopian explorations.

- Worrying for all of two minutes that, as a rookie drummer (and...punk...) with flagrant disregard for proper "technique", I might be an unwittingly perpetrator of the "cheat beat" and then remembering with a sudden warm jolt that I. don't. give. a. shit.

It's January the 2nd. I'm gonna be 27 in a few hours. January 3rd is the date when Nietzsche went mad because he lost his faith in humanity. Not sure what is up to me, but probably I will just get fat by eating homemade pizza while I try to defeat my girlfriend at Scrabble, while we will drink gin and tonic before cuddling. So humanity, please don't get too fucked up on my birthday.

Now it's the 14th of January and I'm pushing the deadline with my Year End Top Ten. My birthday went better then planed even if my better half beat me by a few points. But I got a cake from her and from my mom, thus felt a bit like someone close to Marie Antoinette. My girlfriend surprised me with a balisong knife (which, turns out, is illegal for me to have in many countries) and a homemade Urinals T-shirt, which are amazing gifts. She gave me a Modern Lovers LP for Christmas. Among other things, I made her two mixtapes for Jesus' B-day. One of the tapes had Glue as the opening track 'cause unity songs are about love.

We were out the day after my birthday, because one of my bands played a Food Not Bombs benefit show. The lineup was great, with many of the best local bands. Too many friends again, too much moonshine always. I got so drunk at one point I wanted to break dance but people picked me up from the floor because they thought I fell and was rolling on the floor. I have reenacted horrible scenes from midday talk shows with my girlfriend, laughed a lot, started playing on a guitar that was in the neck of a performing guitar player at one show, and woke up with vague memories. That show raised lots of money, which is cool because Hungary is a place where the government is as dumb as it is hot-headed, so they do whatever they think is right and it forces many people out onto the streets, and so an FNB event is attended by more than a hundred people. This is where solidarity comes in, and benefit shows are a good way to support a noble, because while the only thing you do is you go to show and you have fun. But many times these shows have better vibes. For me almost every show is a benefit show, since it benefits my every day when I'm being close to punk music among punx.

After that I spent ten days with gathering almost everything that falls under my radar of punk music, and I not just listened but tried to write short reviews for my Hungarian blog. I ended up with many bands that I have missed out and 20 A4 pages of reviews. It was kind of an interesting, cool, painstaking, exhausting experiment I wish upon everybody who loves music and likes to have an opinion. During my breaks I was reading Rilke's prose—not poems, because I hate poems—and he writes a lot about sunlight and how it breaks through windows and interacts with peoples' faces. It was interesting

because he has written about sunlight, which is a simple thing, and I was writing review after review of punk bands that most of the times are as simple and similar to each other as the sunlight that we enjoy every day.
I tried my best but 70% of these reviews are sentences trying to bullshit about music that is fast, ugly, dissonant, disordered, desolated, bleak, aggressive, ignorant, beautiful and funny. I don't really care anymore how it ended up that way. I do want to be a good writer, I do want to improve and I do think there is more to music than a guitar player who shreds chords and a singer who screams lines that might rhyme.
But other times, even if something is really good, you just can't express how good it is without starting to speak about awkward, rambled thoughts. Which is fine with me. I have also learned that critics are useful because they do the dirty job. This is one of the jobs where it's the most pure thing, that you gave your time for others. Now, if someone wants to know about punk records in 2013 in Hungarian, they just have to hit up my blog and decide if they trust me or not.

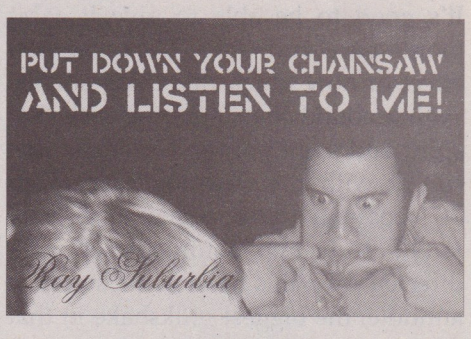
Conclusion One: We use channels (critics with platforms) to learn about new things. There won't be hordes of bands kicking in my doors, presenting their music. *MRR* is a channel; blogs are, as well as live shows. But I feel like I listen to too many American bands and I wanna find out about bands from more hidden, distant places. I'm sure amazing things are happening there as well. Conclusion Two: Punk is still amazing and fuck everybody who says there is just too much music that has been made. Music is not for critics, not for fans, not for listeners. It's for people who wanna express themselves in a sonic way. There are people out there writing essays on the fact that there is too much culture; and at the same time we just shrug our shoulders at the bullshit that is fabricated by the leaders of this world. When and why have we become our own enemies?

I'm also aware of how many bands I have failed to include in my list, which is one of the reasons I made this list. I made this list because I hate lists. I can't put them in order thus I felt I would write about every band. And I wrote about a few. This proves that lists are not sacred and who knows what will be the best thing from 2013, even in a year from now? Wipers influenced more people in the '00s than they had in their hey days. Does it matter to listen to fresh bands? Are they fresh? We are punx, we can do whatever the fuck we want to.

So what do I want to do in 2014? I started putting together a fanzine where I want to have lots of interviews. Never done this; I was never really down for interviews but this is something new I want to try and do. I will try to use my time way better than I manage it now. I wanna write short critiques in my own language about music, movies and books for my blog. I wanna keep doing shows here in Budapest; I wish Norms will be able to write, record and release a record. I also wanna make other zines, a cartoon with my girlfriend, who is a talented graphic designer. I just want to keep doing my punk things.

What do I expect from 2014? Not really an expectation, because I have already heard it, but the new White Wards LP is the shit. It's everything! I also heard the Hysterics 7" (Nah, I don't get promo shit, sadly, I do use soulseek—szivdkianyadbolageci). Hysterics will play here in May and if any of you ladies are reading this, you will be hanging with me and I will make you pizza for breakfast. A month from now I will have Autistic Youth in my room and later Pleasure Leftists, Condominium, etc.. 2014 will be sick. I guess every year is a bit better than the one before and 2013 was kinda cool. My band got released on vinyl, we booked shitloads of bands, I did my radio show, continued writing for *MRR*, joined bands, toured, got together with my girlfriend, left my shit job, was an intern at the coolest news paper in Hungary, bought cool records. Check my YETT, there I talk about music.

I accept gifts from anyone. Even digital links for non-USA bands.
punkersblock.blogspot.hu / vargyai.viktor@gmail.com



Someone joked the other day that since I arrived at *MRR* the amount of conversations revolving around bitcoins has pretty much gone up 100%. I've even been joking that the zine should start accepting bitcoins. Yes, "joking." Besides trending on the internet, where a surprising amount of Bay Area punks apparently don't seem to hang out, the idea of bitcoins have been popping up in the most surprising of places around the Bay: giant billboards. It seems that some crypto-capitalists (or are they anarcho-economists? Hmmm...) have taken it upon themselves to put up billboards in San Francisco and Oakland that read, "The revolution has started...where do you stand?"

After looking a little more into these billboards, it turns out they've been put up by a bitcoin awareness group that goes by the name of Arise Bitcoin. Apparently they've purchased 40 billboards around the Bay Area—from Petaluma all the way to South San Jose. Personally, I've only seen one in West Oakland and one in SOMA, but I'll take these folks' word that the other 38 exist. The boards went up on December 27th and will go down on January 27th. So why am I writing about an ad campaign that won't even be around by the time you read this? 'Cause I think it's completely bonkers that we live in a time where people have created a *real life* ad campaign for *digital* money.

I'm not going to turn this chunk of space in *MRR* into an "Idiot Punx Guide to Bitcoins," you all can use the internet and read up on that stuff yourself. I'm just fascinated by the increasing permeation of the internet into real

life space. There was once a time when people, especially punks, were derided for utilizing and embracing the internet. It wasn't "real." This zine itself famously played on that when the "Last Print Issue" cover was put out in April of 1999. (Do yourself a favor and, if you can, go back and check out the Letters section of the zine in the issues following that one, and have a laugh reading the responses to this obvious joke.) But in 2013, the internet is just as real as the ground you walk on. Meeting people on dating sites isn't *completely* weird and creepy anymore. Having internet-only friends isn't just for pedobear neckbeards in their parent's basement. Every day we see how the internet and digitally based social media (which I lump in under the umbrella term "the internet") affect the real world more and more.

Look at the use of the social media in political upheavals all over the world in the past couple of years. When the governments in Egypt, Syria and Iran shut off the internet in their countries, people all over the world lost their shit. Now, obviously, those are extreme examples and I'm not about to compare the libertarian/anarchist wet dream (oh, how I hate to draw parallels between those two groups, but hey...) of a government-free currency to on-the-street/at-the-barricades revolution—although Arise Bitcoin seems to. I guess what I'm trying to say, is that the internet is real in ways that are only now being recognized by the general public. But let's go back to bitcoins for moment...

A few good friends of mine in Carbondale, IL got drunk one night and decided to convert their band's fund into bitcoins. This was just before the huge rise in value, where bitcoins became worth more than gold (quick interjection: if you can rationally, and successfully, explain to me with a straight face how gold or paper money is somehow more meaningful as fiat currency than bitcoins, I'll Herzog my shoe). Now, I don't want to paint the picture that the dudes in the Heat Tape are drunken buffoons jumping on some kinda internet trend. They knew what they were getting into—one of the guys in the band has a brother who is both an economist and an academic, who has researched the implications and effects of bitcoins, and other cryptocurrencies, on real world economies. Sounds like a buncha bullshit right? Nope. Sometimes shit's real because we decide it's real. You know, like god, or orgonite, or punk. And guess what, the Heat Tape are legitimately richer because of that. Right now their guitarist, Nic, is trying to see if he can get either United Record Pressing or Rainbo Records to accept the band's bitcoins to press records. Sounds ridiculous, but take a look at spendbitcoins.com and you'll find a surprising amount of diverse businesses that will accept bitcoins. You can already buy pretty much anything. The internet is real and skynet has become self-aware.

This relegation of the internet as some kind of "other" space has created the type of mindset which has allowed things like the NSA's complete disregard for the 4th Amendment when it comes to collecting our personal data. As humans are becoming more and more digital, you no longer have to knock down someone's door in order to go through all their personal affects. Now that people are starting to have the uncomfortable feeling that the government is creeping around their homes digitally, they're starting to notice how real the internet actually is. This feeling of URL as IRL is *very* tangible here in the Bay. Around here things like Google, Yelp, and Twitter aren't disembodied internet services that only exist on a screen. Google has a very, very real presence around here. Just look at the Google buses in the city, and now the Google boat and the Google "island" in the Bay.

For those of you who don't know about these things, Google has basically decided that the Bay Area is theirs to do what they want with. Google buses are private buses that transport the company's employees to and from work. Think of a yellow school bus full of oblivious, entitled, spoiled brats—which is an absolutely perfect metaphor because that's exactly how Google acts. These buses, in and of themselves, aren't a terrible or evil thing. It's the fact that they use public space, like municipal bus lanes and bus stops, and take up space for their private use paid for by the public; that's the problem. Plus, they're just a buncha dickbags. You might remember Ari's column where she talked about how some dude was straight up harassing her on the street and the Google bus driver kicked her off the bus when she hopped on trying to get away from this creepazoid. Do you even empathize, bro? And since then Google has hired some 21st century Pinkerton style goons to guard their precious transport fleet.

Just the other day the newly christened Google boat, modestly named The Triumphant, set sail on its maiden voyage—and immediately fucked up the lives of regular working Joes trying to get from the East Bay to the city. Apparently The Triumphant decided to dock in the spot where the regular Alameda/Oakland commuter ferry docks. The port authorities told the ferry that they had to wait for Google to leave before they could use the pier. Google is real and a real fucking dick. As for the mysterious Google "island" in the Bay, well, apparently Google isn't happy just buying up land, and has built *two* mobile island type barge that will theoretically move around the Bay every month and dock at different locations. Oh, there's also one in Connecticut and one in Maine. The internet is essentially now building land.

If that isn't weird and creepy enough, let's talk about how the CEO of Google, Larry Page, wants to "set aside a part of the world for technological experiments." I mean, yeah, we've been kinda doing that for years, but the machinations of this idea somehow seem even more sinister to me. Couple that with the growing secessionist mentality of people in Silicon Valley and it should come as no surprise that companies like Google are living all over us with absolutely no concern or care.

You have the founder of PayPal and über-creepy Palantir (seriously, naming your start up, that has CIA backing and utilizes "intelligence automation," after something an evil wizard in *Lord of the Rings* uses, is pretty fucking ballsy) both rallying people around the idea of technocratic seasteading. You've got technologies investor/wingnut Tim Draper drafting a legit ballot initiative to break California into six separate states, thus giving Silicon Valley its own government. And then there's Galt's Gulch in Chile, an attempt at creating a meritocratic city-state by libertarian American expatriates—with an economy based on bitcoin. Founder, Ken Johnson, has already acquired the land, mining, and water rights to the valley.

Let's also not overlook Tom Perkins, former director of Compaq, Genentech, Hewlett-Packard, and Phillips Electronics going from zero to Godwin's Law in one sentence, by writing an open letter to the *Wall Street Journal* calling "attention to the parallels of fascist Nazi Germany to its war on its 'one percent,' namely its Jews, to the progressive war on the American one percent, namely the 'rich.'" I mean, that's the kind of delusional and entitled mentality Silicon Valley creates and harbors. Now you have Google spending who knows how much to purchase the military robotics developer Boston Dynamics, a reported $3.2 *billion* on acquiring Nest Labs (a company that makes the most advanced data collecting home monitoring sensor systems available), and having to allegedly create an "artificial intelligence ethics board" in order to make sure that it won't abuse the technologies acquired in their $400 million buyout of DeepMind. Seriously, can things possibly get any more foreboding?

So within this current zeitgeist of the people who *are* the internet, it's not hard to understand why they could care less about the general public. Why would they give a fuck about society when they don't even really want to be a part of it? I don't think it was until that Google bus got smashed up by protestors in West Oakland this past December that the internet finally started realizing that people were waking up and noticing that the internet had been looming over them IRL, not just URL. They live, we tumbl.

So am I advocating some kinda Kaczynski-esque retreat into neo-primitivism? *Fuck no.* I like to be able to communicate with people effortlessly. I want instant access to information. I want to trade music with friends anywhere in the world and troll comments sections. I *love* the internet. *Give me chan culture or give me death!* But what I am saying is that a world where the internet is over here, and the "real world" is over there no longer exists anymore-if it ever really did. Keep in mind the people who hacked the info that lead to the convictions of the rapists in Steubenville, OH are facing possibly harsher jail sentences than the rapists. That people like Aaron Swartz are committing suicide because of the chilling effect the government has created concerning access to info via the internet. Chelsea Manning is rotting in prison and Edward Snowden will probably never touch U.S. soil again outside of a coffin. The government knows that the internet is very real, as do the cops and the justice system. So let's all stop fooling ourselves into thinking that the internet stays in one place when we walk away from our computers. It doesn't. The internet is real, and it's coming for you.

***

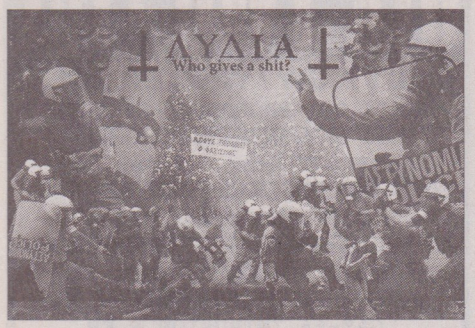
So this is the Year End Top 10 issue. I've got my list in here as well as alongside dozens of other punks from around the world. And while people can put a record on their Top Ten that wasn't reviewed in *MRR*, you can't list something that *wouldn't* be reviewed in the zine. So I'm gonna wield my columnist privilege and list a couple things that were amazing that wouldn't be covered otherwise.

YOUTH CODE – LP

With all this post-punk revival going on these past few years I've been waiting patiently for the moment when the machines take over. And it took, of all people, the former singer of CARRY ON to help make it happen. When I first heard this album, I honestly thought it was a late '80s Wax Trax!/Nettwerk band that I somehow never came across. This is equal parts NITZER EBB, FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY, and pre-heroin MINISTRY. Hard driving beats, politically charged samples, effects laden vocals. "Carried Mask" is a total banger that sonically screams *"fuck you, dad"* just as well as any pissed off '80s USHC or D-beat can. This record is fucking dark and angry as all hell. That RØSENKØPF full length from 2012 showed that the punks were slowly staggering towards the more electronic side of the dark post-punk, but this record is the full-on leap that I hope more bands follow. Some people might argue that it's not punk at all, and they might be right. But if history shows anything, it's that punk doesn't *have* to be guitar oriented, after all, that's a bit rockist, innit? The perfect soundtrack for our increasingly nuclear diseased, post-apocalyptic, electronic surveillance state prison planet. (Dais)

ZEBRA CAKE – EP

Sometimes you find a cake that makes all the other cakes in your collection obsolete. I picked this one up from a local distro after the NEGATIVE STANDARDS/PERMANENT RUIN show in Oakland. Taking the best parts of the timeless SWEET PLAIN CAKE and adding a nod to the classic style of N.Y. BLACK AND WHITE COOKIE's dual-flavor attack with a touch of post-TWINKIES style cream filling, ZEBRA CAKE blew my fucking mind! I was with a friend when I first experienced the intense, raw power of ZEBRA CAKE and she'll totally vouch that I pretty much entered an altered state of consciousness immediately. The packaging wasn't all the best and left a little to be desired, but really, the quality of the cake itself more than made up for it. It's not like I got this thing because of what the sleeve looked like. My only complaint was that it was too short—I could definitely have gone for some more. That being said, I still loved every minute of it. Recommended. (Little Debbie)



Shut Up and Deal With it

Getting old really sucks. This is theoretically my birthday month and this year I'll be turning 28. "That's 28 years awesome, people!" Ha ha, I love that mentality but seriously, it's just one more year closer to death. Which is the inevitable fate of man, the price of living—so I might as well wallow in my own self-pity for a pint or two, while the clouds are still hanging low, then by morning I'll be back to work, back on track. *Caer está permitido; levantarse es obligatorio.*

Year End Top 10

I have heard a lot of great records this year, and normally it's one of the hardest things to do, compile this list. However, my existentialist personality and experiential nature mean that the records I consider the best are usually the ones that make my heart flutter. Hopeless romantic? Irrational favouritism? Or just subjective selection? Whatever you wanna call it, here are the records that helped me make it through another year of chaos control.

Epic Bleakness: PANDIMIA – "Moderna Panoukla" 12" (eye5 / Imminent Destruction / Scullcrasher / Scarecrow / We Don't Fight It)

This record was the one I played the most on repeat over and over again. Super well written, a fair production that gives this band's anarcho/post-punk sound enough space and grit to make your bones quiver, and the best fucking vocals and lyrics in Greek punk since the Antimob record in late 2012. Superb! I can't wait for their next expulsion of negative energy! "There is no yesterday. There is no tomorrow."

Raging Spite: BURIAL – "Renegade" 12" (Hardware)

Ugh! What to say about this energized, pissed off, snotty hardcore from Germany? The production is amazing and they churn out one trudging rager after another, with reverbed vocals that spit venom, guitar work that's a perfect mix of Japcore solo noodling, mean chugging riffs, and frantic drumming that have you in a frenzy! The tracks on this 12" just make me want to run wild in the streets and ramble into decadence! Grab this, bang your head against a wall, smash your TV with a baseball bat or kick that fucking cop in the balls—it's an adrenaline kick like no other!

Melodic Lament: QUOD MASSACRE – "Kje Je Odgovor!" LP + GOLA JAJA – "Naked Bollocks" LP (NE!)

I've said it before, I'll say it again: NE! Records was the best label for me this year, releasing stellar slabs of wax from ex-Yugo bands. There is no doubt that region was highly prolific during the '80s and Slovenian QUOD MASSACRE and Croatian GOLA JAJA confirm this statement. With deeply melancholic tones, pensive lyrics and compositions that go well beyond the classic punk cannon, these bands made some statement tracks that will twist their way into your heart and stay with you forever. Small pieces of a punk history well worth preserving!

Punk Extraordinaire: KAOS – "Betonska Djeca" LP (NE!)

Holy shit was this Croatian band some kind of revelation! You hear so many bands trying to sound like this today and then comes along this record, containing within it all the sonic experimentation and blissful post-punk eeriness you ever wanted, ad you think, "shit, *this* is fucking punk! The vocals on this are absolutely enchanting, spooky and spine chilling and the whole record transports you to its own surreal world of deformed melodies and reconstructed realities. Avant-garde punk.

Exciting Discovery: KLAXON – "1984" LP (Sydney Town)

Thanks to Justin Briggs for playing this record for me! This Italian band plays such a beautiful yet intense mix of proto-punk, proto-Oi! and rock'n'roll, yet still deeply catchy, sensitive, festive and political. "Prisoner" was probably my favourite track of the year. Excellent!

Purposeful Strike: VOĈO PROTESTA – "Neniam Konfidu al la Stato" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Excellent chaotic Japanese punk, summoning the very best elements of distorted Japanese hardcore with some added early European stress! And Esperanto anarchist lyrics. Love this sound and love the urgency and demanding nature of every track! Haunting guitars and crashing drums that make my insides tingle, with menacing, hypnotizing vocals and a production that storms the room like a mob of revolutionaries! Fucking fantastic!

Power Raid: ABSURDO – flexi + 12" (Discos Absurdos)

Damn, what energy these guys have! I missed all their Bay Area shows because I was working (of course!) but fuck is this some driven, tight stuff! This has a sort of vintage sound, but with a very modern earnestness and the way they just go into every track really grabs you. Pissed off and passionate! All elements merge and you feel it surge through your whole body and off you go!

Maggie Thatcher Rot in Peace: GOOD THROB – "Culture Vulture" EP (Muscle Horse)

I don't know if it has anything to do with my English punk half feeling rather undernourished, but I just fucking love everything about this release! The vocals and lyrics are so powerful and in your face, they really have that essential *punk* element that sets apart certain bands. Intellectuals, nihilists, smart asses, darlings, bearers of stark realism? Whatever they may be, they have taken simplicity and drawn it out; twisted, bent and pounded it into a phenomenal *pièce de résistance.*

Chaos Control: DHK – "La Krudeza No Muere" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Another anarchist D-beat rager. There is something primal about this that just makes so much sense! The vocals are gruff, the drums are relentless, the bass throbbing and the melodies are simple but effective. Infectious and commanding, this puts me in the right mood to face the day! It's noisy and scary and it's what you should play at top volume for your idiot neighbours next time they piss you off!

Mind Mixers: V/A – "Welcome to 2013" LP (Not Normal)

This was one helluva comp! Oh my! With such bands as INSERVIBLES, HONDARTZAKO HONDAKINAK, ASPIRINA INFANTIL, CÜLO, BROWN SUGAR, PORKERIA, GOOD THROB and many more, how could this not be included? An excellent one to pick if you want a good mix of jams and ragers!

Very Honourable Mentions

PROXY's *Police Car* EP was probably the perfect mix tape jam; DEFEKTNO EFEKTNI's *D/A* 45 has a couple of the best bass lines I heard all year; I'm super happy about the Greek reissues V/A *Diataraxi Koinis Isihias* LP, ADIEXODO's *.38* LP and the EX-HUMANS *Anofeli Epiviosi* LP. The PLEASURE LEFTISTS *Elephant Men/ Not Over* 45 and SHOPPING *Customer Complaints* LP made the perfect back-to-back listening experience, while the GLAM *Veneno en Sus Flechas* 12" spun me through many a heavy workload! OK, I have to stop now and get my life back!

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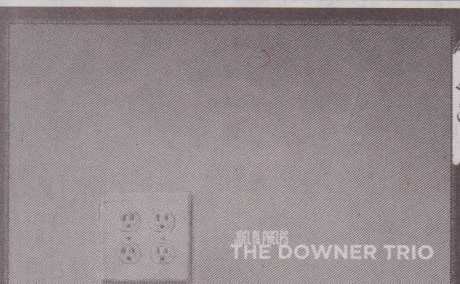

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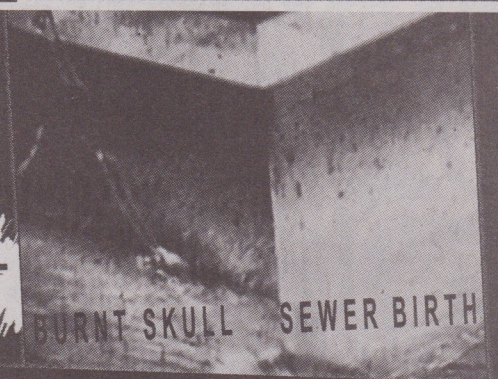

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We didn't even have to bribe them with pizza!!!

So if you've got your scummy hands on a one of these records you've got Andrew, Dan, Garth, Greg, Jason, Logan, Mark, Martin, Mike, Oscar, and Sami to thank! These folks already do so much to keep the zine running, and it's amazing to know that they'll put in the extra effort when MRR needs it.

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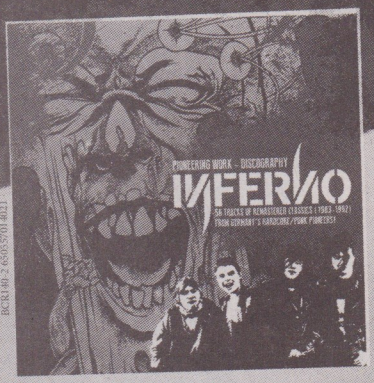

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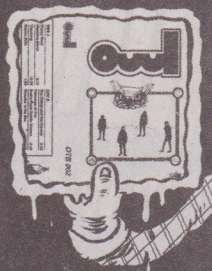

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Maximum Rocknroll News compiled by Donny

LOUISIANA FORESTS BEING SACRIFICED TO FUEL EUROPE'S BIOMASS BOOM

by Peter Moskowitz for Al Jazeera America

The smell of freshly cut wood wafting from a dirt lot along an industrial stretch of road near the state capital might not conjure up an image of green energy, but some say this is the future of sustainability.

The smell comes from two white plastic domes rising high along the Mississippi River. Stored inside those domes are millions of wood pellets, which started as trees in the surrounding 50- to 75-mile area, and were converted to easily shippable and burnable material at mammoth factories where wood can stretch as far as the eye can see.

The white domes aren't the pellets' final destination.

After being packed into containers, the wood is shipped to Europe, where power companies will burn them in an effort to meet the European Union's stringent renewable energy requirements.

This is known as biomass energy.

The problem is, not everyone thinks burning wood is green.

Environmentalists in Louisiana are crying foul over European corporations using Louisiana's forests for their profit and perhaps polluting the planet in the process.

Last month, as the white domes were being constructed, Western Louisiana–based environmental activist Dean Wilson sounded the alarm, telling his fellow environmentalists the state's forests could be under threat. As more and more power plants in Europe convert to biomass, he said, more and more forests in the United States could disappear.

Wilson and his wife, Cara Leverett, live in a small shack with their young son and two dogs in the middle of the largest swampland in the US. It's called the Atchafalaya Basin. The basin's thousands of acres of cypress, bottomland hardwood trees and coastal marshes are a refuge for wildlife. They also act as a sponge when hurricanes cause the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico to surge.

Despite the Atchafalaya Basin's size, Wilson and Leverett are the only employees of Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, which is the only nonprofit dedicated to overseeing the basin's hundreds of miles—extending from the southwestern tip of Louisiana at the Gulf of Mexico to north of the state capital.

The fact that few others are watching over the Atchafalaya has made Leverett and Wilson the default warning system for any perceived threats to the woods.

In 2008, Wilson was able to trace bags of cypress mulch being sold at Walmart, Home Depot and other retailers—labeled as sustainably harvested—back to clear-cut Atchafalaya woodlands. He and his fellow Louisiana activists pressured the companies to stop selling the mulch.

It was a big victory for Wilson and his ilk. Wilson said he's noticed a drop in logging in the Atchafalaya since 2008 because of that win.

But now he worries that the demand for biomass in Europe will reverse his work to protect the woods.

"They said not a single cypress was being used, but they lied in the past," he said. "Why wouldn't they lie again?"

In 2007, the European Union set an ambitious goal to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 20 percent below their 1990 levels by 2020. That, in effect, required power plants across the continent to quickly find new ways to make energy. Some turned to wind and solar. But for coal-fired power plants, it was much cheaper to convert their facilities to burn wood. The conundrum for those companies is that much of Western Europe doesn't have sufficiently large forests left to meet the demand, and the remaining woodland is heavily regulated. So, corporations turned to the Southeastern US, where wood is plentiful and regulations about what can be done on private land are lax.

Wood pellet manufacturing in the US is now booming.

Drax, Britain's largest coal plant, is in the process of converting most of its operations to biomass fuel, and other power plants across the continent are following suit.

In 2008, Europe imported about 2.5 million tons of wood pellets. By 2012, it imported 9 million. And by 2020, it's projected to import upward of 20 million tons, largely from the US and Canada, according to John Bingham of Hawkins Wright, a British forest products consultancy.

Biomass advocates say the technology is good for the environment because it's carbon-neutral—trees are cut down, and they grow back. They point out that European companies must show they're harvesting woods in line with the EU's sustainability standards.

But many environmentalists and scientists who've studied the issue believe that current industry practices virtually guarantee a loss of carbon in the process, and that diverse ecosystems are often the collateral damage.

"It's just not as simple as 'the trees will grow back,'" said Norman Christensen, a professor of environmental science and policy at Duke University. "Yes, you are regaining carbon when trees grow back, but when you cut landscapes intensely, you release some degree of carbon to the atmosphere more or less permanently."

Christensen and others say that in the years it takes to grow the trees back, a harvested forest isn't sequestering nearly as much carbon as it would were trees not cut down.

Mark Harmon, a professor of forestry science at Oregon State University, said it's helpful to imagine a forest as a bucket and carbon as water.

"It's kind of like a leaky bucket—if you put another hole in the bucket, it's harder for the bucket to hold water," he said. "Biomass producers are saying they're going to harvest more, saying they're going to take more trees, and saying that won't lead to more leaks (of carbon). But if you take more, you'll have more leaks."

Add to that the oil burned to get wood pellets from the Mississippi River to Europe, and biomass begins to look less and less attractive to environmentalists.

"It's ludicrous that we're chopping down our forests and shipping them to Europe to help meet their energy goals," said Scot Quaranda, the campaign director for the Dogwood Alliance, a forest watchdog group. "But in the South, on private land, you can basically get away with anything."

Quaranda said his group has documented several cases of forests clear-cut for biomass fuel. A *Wall Street Journal* report also found clear-cutting in North Carolina.

Seth Ginther, a lawyer with the US Industrial Pellet Association, insists the pellet industry is not responsible for environmental damage. But he acknowledged that private landowners are free to do what they wish, including cut down whole trees on their land.

And in the South, where nearly 90 percent of land is privately owned, there is no law on the books requiring landowners to grow those trees back.

Dozens of biomass facilities have been built in the South. There are currently two in Louisiana, with eight more planned, according to Quaranda.

With a permit to build roads for logging in a protected area of the Atchafalaya pending approval from the Army Corps of Engineers, Wilson worries he's just seen the beginning of a decades-long battle to protect the woods he's been looking after since the 1980s.

Now, Wilson is trying to employ the same tactic he used when he found out retailers were selling cypress mulch taken from the Atchafalaya.

Working with European environmentalists from groups such as Birdlife and Friends of the Earth, Wilson is attempting to establish a chain of accountability—from a Louisiana tree to a European light bulb.

He knows regulations are unlikely to become more protective in Louisiana, so he and others are hoping that, by showing Europeans where their supposedly renewable energy is coming from, they can persuade the European Commission's energy division to reconsider how it treats biomass as a renewable energy source. If it does, environmentalists hope that will effectively kill the market for wood pellets in the South.

But this time around, establishing a chain of accountability will be harder for Wilson. When companies were logging for cypress mulch, he could find bags of the mulch branded with company logos in his local Walmart.

Now, it's hard to even find out who owns the massive biomass factories and storage facilities surrounding Baton Rouge. And the wood isn't going to Walmart—it's going thousands of miles away to highly guarded power plants in remote parts of Europe.

"With the cypress mulch, we managed to find the trucks and the bags and take pictures," Wilson said. "This time we don't have that. It's going into a black hole."

STREET BATTLES IN HAMBURG AS ACTIVISTS DEFEND ROSA FLORA SQUAT

for Contra Info

The main demo was scheduled for 2 p.m., starting at the Rote Flora squat, located on Schulterblatt Street in the Schanze district of Hamburg, Germany, but there were a couple more calls for street protest before and after this one.

More than 7,000 participated in December 28's protest (others estimate a total of 10,000 people) against attempted eviction of the Rote Flora squat, a building occupied for more than 24 years, threatened to be sold by owner Klausmartin Kretschmer.

Additionally, the mobilization referred to the right to stay for refugees and the Esso houses at the Reeperbahn, but was also directed against gentrification, daily surveillance, and repression within the "danger zones" (authorities are calling parts of Hamburg danger zones, like the area where the Rote Flora squat is located). Meanwhile, in the early hours of December 15, the Esso houses were evacuated by police and municipal authorities on the pretext of danger of collapse.

On December 21, the police attacked a large contingent of protesters shortly after the beginning of the noon demo in the Schanze district, to prevent people from continuing the protest. The Hamburg police announced that the demonstration "started too early" and was therefore stopped; later, they claimed that first they were attacked, and then unleashed a crackdown. Truth is the demo was halted at around 20 yards from the Rote Flora squat, when the cops used water cannons, baton charges and pepper spray against protesters. Despite the repression blows, many demonstrators fought back, and it came to strong clashes. Police forces were pelted with stones, bottles, fireworks, smoke-bombs and other objects. In addition, construction barriers and other materials were used for street barricades. The situation went out of control, and cops were massively attacked. Amid street battles, two cops reportedly drew their weapons at people (a rumor regarding a warning shot has not been confirmed), and repression forces kettled almost the whole of Schanze. Many protesters were heavily injured by cops, while anti-riot squads attempted to detain demonstrators en masse, but mostly to split blocs and chase people away.

The Hamburg police announced that 19 people were taken into custody and investigated for "committing a breach of the peace." The legal aid team (Ermittlungsausschuss Hamburg) counted approximately 260 arrests/defentions and more than 500 injured protesters. One of the arrestees, who did not have German documents, was kept in custody.

Hamburg's free radio, FSK, transmitted live reports from the streets all day.

Later that evening, protesters tried to carry out further rallies and spontaneous actions in the inner city, and some skirmishes broke out. Spontaneous gathering and barricading took place in front of the Esso houses, too. Around the St. Pauli district, some of the actions included attacks on the Empire Riverside Hotel, stores, cars (smashed windows), the Hamburger Sparkasse (Haspa) and other bank branches. Surprise demonstrations and direct actions took place the whole night. At the same time, solidarity actions were called in other parts of Germany.

Solidarity to the Oranienplatz protest camp, the Rote Flora squat, the Esso houses initiative, and all combative refugees and migrants!

One day before the big demonstration on December 21, investor Gert Baer and owner Klausmartin Kretschmer demanded the eviction of the Rote Flora squat. Even though it would take them months to get a judicial decision on such an eviction, their ultimatum was a direct provocation.

Late that evening, the Davidwache cop station at the Reeperbahn was effectively attacked by more than 200 people.

PARAGUAY GRANTS LICENSE TO BULLDOZE UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE

from Survival International

Paraguayhas caused outrage by quietly granting cattle ranchers a license to bulldoze a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, which is also the last refuge of uncontacted Ayoreo people.

Paraguay's Environment Ministry has violated national and international law by issuing an environmental license to ranching company Yaguarete Pora S.A., which puts the lives of the uncontacted people in extreme danger.

Contacted members of the tribe have been working tirelessly to gain legal title to the land inhabited by their uncontacted relatives. Many Ayoreo who were in the past forcibly brought out of the forest now suffer from respiratory diseases such as tuberculosis, and many have died as a result.

The Ayoreo expressed their outrage at the revelations and said, "Our relatives came out of the forest in 2004 because they were under pressure from the ranchers, because they had no peace. If the bulldozers start to make a lot of noise, our uncontacted relatives will be forced to hide where there isn't any food, and they will suffer. We want to continue using the forest and for the ranchers to stop harassing our relatives who remain there."

Satellite images reveal that Brazilian beef company Yaguarete—owned by Marcelo Bastos Ferraz—has already started destroying vast stretches of forest inhabited by the uncontacted Ayoreo. The rancher's beef is destined for the European market, prompting Survival International to write to the European Commission over Yaguarete's activities.

Survival's Director Stephen Corry said, "Government officials risk sacrificing Ayoreo lives in their greedy scrabble for foreign profits. Cattle ranching is steadily destroying the last refuge of Paraguay's only uncontacted tribespeople. Sooner or later, beef produced illegally on the tribe's land will be on EU supermarket shelves."

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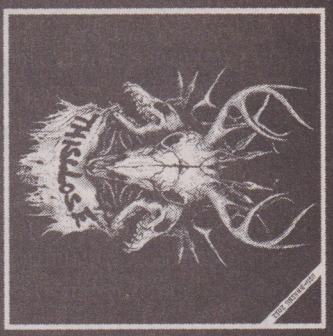

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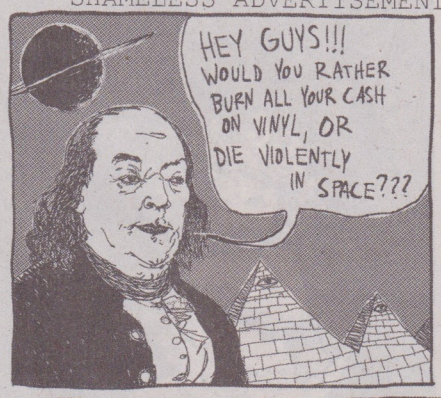

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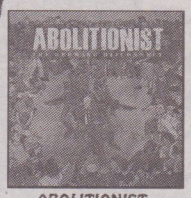

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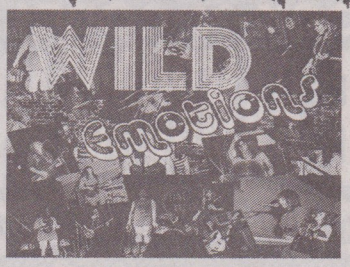

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NO TIME

1. Band was formed in Pittsburgh in June 2013.
2. We were kicking around the idea of starting this band for a while, but were all too busy and focused on other projects. 3/5's of this band were involved in another band and when said band broke up, No Time finally came to fruition. We all have played in plenty of fast punk and hardcore bands and we wanted to do something a little different this time around. I think it's fair to say that a few of us have an unhealthy addiction for early British Oi! music, so everything just kinda fell into place.
3. Struggle, friends, enemies, war, dog-eat-dog society.
4. I would say it's a good mix of Oi!, '77 punk, and maybe even a bit of UK82 thrown in the mix. At least that's what it sounds like to me!
5. The demo is going to be released on 7" soon. We have a Mind Cure single coming out in March. Working on a LP and doing some scattered weekends throughout the winter. This summer we plan on touring a bit and in the fall doing a month in Europe with our pals Hounds of Hate. You download/stream the tunes at notimepgh.bandcamp.com and you can contact us via email at notimepgh@gmail.com.

BAD PEOPLE

1. Late 2012 in Buffalo, NY.
2. Biff, John, and I (Nick) knew eachother from going to shows for 10+ years. After the break up of Brown Sugar, none of us were in a fast hardcore band, but we all wanted to be. Josh joined up when he moved to Buffalo in March 2013.
3. Sexual depravity, drug use, self destruction, social isolation, mental illness, and despair.
4. Play some '70s LA punk cassette for 20 seconds, then hold down the play and fast-forward buttons for 10 seconds, then let it play for ten more seconds.
5. We are just starting to work on an LP which should be out by the middle of 2013. Aside from that, hopefully we'll play a good deal of out-of-town dates.

ČERNOBLISKA DECA

1. January 1st. 2011, Belgrade, Serbia.
2. At the time the band was formed, we were just fifteen-year-old kids who listened to punk and wanted to play some of their own. In a short while, plain old punk became hardcore and we got a bit older, but basically the point of the band's existence hasn't changed—it's still just good music and having fun.
3. The lyrics are mostly about everyday things, what we appreciate in today's society, and what we don't. Also, some of the against the system in a subtle manner.
4. We like to think that the best way to describe our sound is simply old school hardcore punk. Our songs sound like a mix of the early '80s Boston scene (Jerry's Kids, Gang Green, etc.) and early NOFX albums, with, of course, an original touch of our own.
5. Being just over eighteen, we still mostly do gigs in our hometown and have recorded only one demo EP. We hope to expand our field, play other towns across Serbia, and later on across Europe. We plan on recording some more material as soon as we get the chance to. You can check our stuff out at cernobilskadeca.bandcamp.com or www.facebook.com/cernobilskadeca.

GROSS

1. Gross became a band in early September and formed in Orlando, Florida.
2. Out of boredom, mostly. Christian, who wrote the entire demo instrumentally, wanted to start a fast punk band, so he wrote and recorded some songs and asked me (Jesse) to sing for it. That's all, really.
3. The lyrics on the demo cover a few topics. The first song is about people in punk and hardcore who are really only concerned about merch and rarities rather than ideas and the actual music, which I think is a big problem. The other songs are about how a lot of people I know romanticize growing up, getting drunk at shitty bars, cat-calling women, working desk jobs, that sort of thing. The new songs follow the same trajectory—how real life is just depressing and shit.
4. I guess Gross sounds like fast hardcore punk with some slower, noisier aspects. Someone said the third song on the demo sounds like Cult Ritual mixed with "Nothing Left Inside" by Black Flag. you can judge for yourself how accurate that is.
5. Just practicing often and playing as many shows as we can. We have some exciting ones coming up (No Qualms, Mindset...) that should be sick. We're currently working with some labels on releasing the demo on tape, I'm doing a zine for Gross dedicated to Nan Goldin, Christian is writing some new songs for an EP, and keeping as busy possible.

ALMOST READY

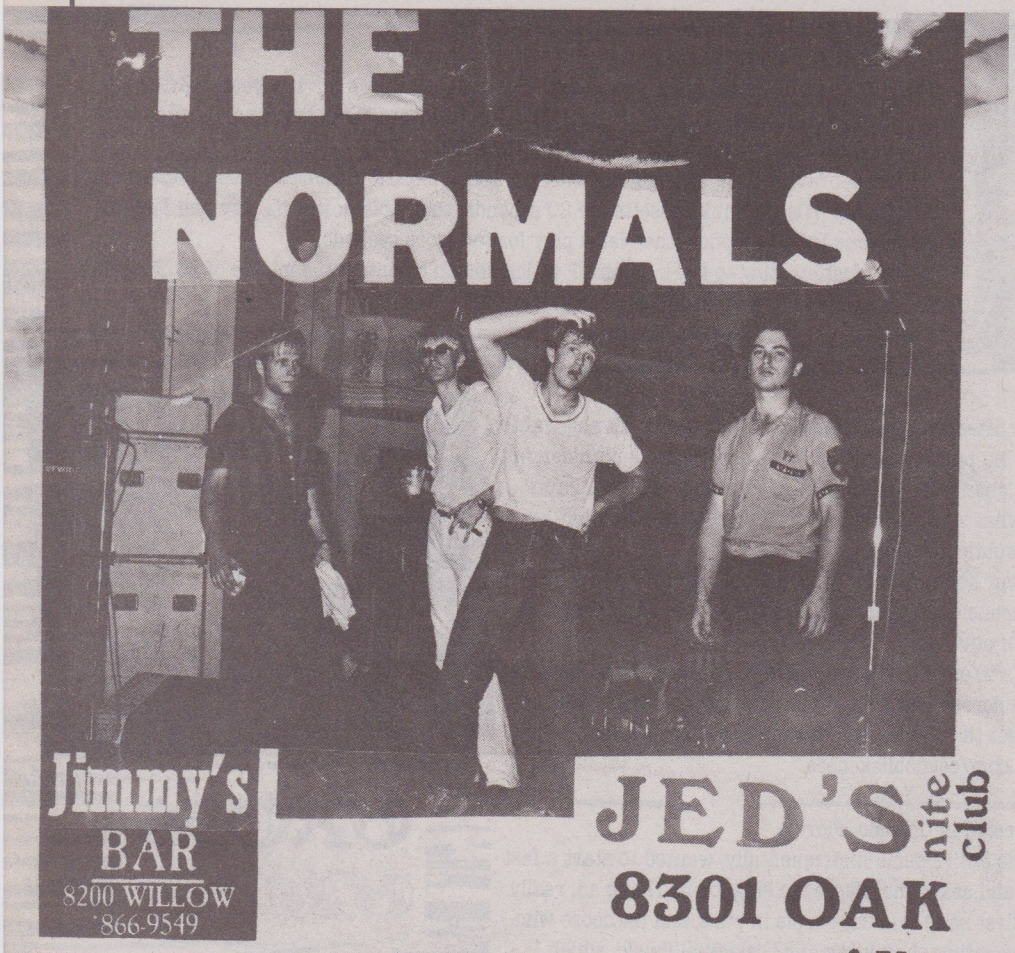
The Story of Punk Rock in New Orleans

An interview with director Al Champagne by Osa Atoe

I could ask a million different people how they found out about punk and what it meant to them when they did, and never get bored with hearing the variety of answers. It could be Ian MacKaye's story or my friend's, but I put equal weight on those anecdotes because it's not about who it happened to, or how well-known they became. It's about that transformational moment and how good it feels to discover something that makes everything new again. It's like a fresh start in life that a lot of people never get to experience.

New Orleans never produced a nationally famous punk band, but ideally, the concept of fame doesn't matter to punk, does it? I like to think about how punk rock eventually creeped into every crevice of our country and made its mark, no matter how small the scene. Director Al Champagne, his production partner Pablo Romero-Estevez and cameraman Andrew Mayeux, have been working on Almost Ready: The Story of Punk Rock in New Orleans for over two years now, attempting to piece together a recent history of a scene that didn't leave many artifacts behind. Most early New Orleans punk bands didn't even get a chance to record or put out a record.

The documentary title Almost Ready (a song by the Normals) hints at the almost-but-not-quite nature of New Orleans punk… All of the bands that broke up too soon, the bands that tried to move to NYC to get big but missed the boat, the truly great bands that were underrated at the time but are finally enjoying a bit of attention in the last couple of years due to new vinyl reissues. In this interview, Al Champagne speaks on the artistic variety, fearlessness and scene unity in the late 1970s-to-mid-'80s New Orleans punk rock, new wave and hardcore.



MRR: Where are you at in the making of the film at this point?
Well, we've been doing interviews for the past two years and we've got a few left to do locally. My production partner Pablo Romero-Estevez moved out to LA and he'll be interviewing some subjects who have since moved out there. We're almost finished shooting the project as a whole. The end of the month will mark the two-year anniversary of our first shoot. We've done a few dozen interviews so far.

MRR: So, there are a substantial number of old New Orleans punks living in LA?
You'd be surprised. A gentleman from the Skinnies by the name of Rick Polizzi… If that name sounds familiar, it's because he's one of the producers of the Simpsons. There are a lot of folks in LA.

MRR: Being from New Orleans, was this older stuff easy to find or did you feel you had to discover it?
I found it pretty early, when I was around eleven or so. But you gotta figure, when I was in elementary school, they'd bring some guy in to speak to the kids. And I guess the story is, he was some former drug addict or alcoholic, but he would go and warn the kids about all the evil music out there, and all he did was end up introducing a bunch of bored eleven- and twelve-year-old suburban kids to music they'd otherwise never hear of. So, punk rock, metal… He even ended up mentioning how he thought

that Woodstock should never come back. So, basically from this guy, an entire generation of preteens was introduced to everything from Slayer to the Dead Kennedys; things that they otherwise would have probably never heard of.

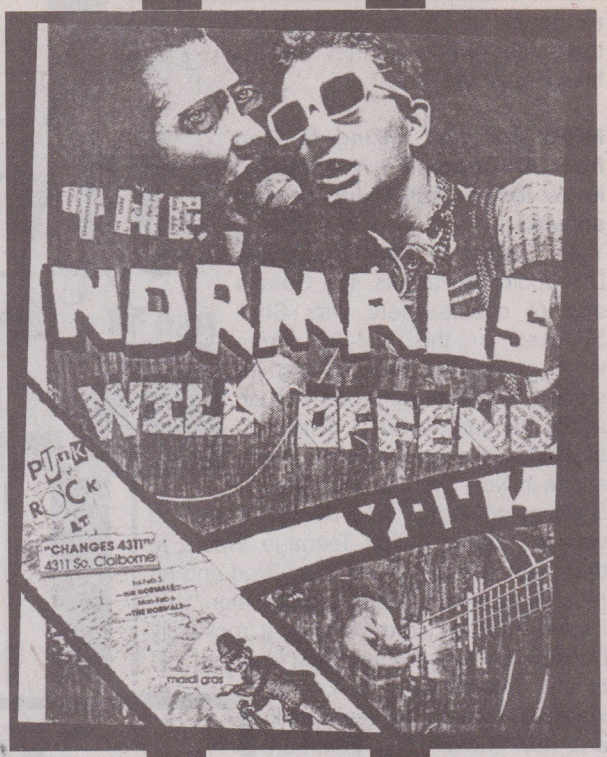
MRR: What about the local stuff, specifically?
I hadn't heard about this scene until probably over a decade ago. I was in a record store—I think one of the chain stores in Kenner—and I came across a CD by a band called the Normals whom I'd never heard of, so I picked up that CD. Pretty much all of the knowledge I had of the early days of New Orleans punk rock came from the liner notes of that CD. I'd actually had the idea to do a documentary about [early New Orleans punk] ever since. It turns out that there was so little written about it that I could find, I thought this was only going to be a small project with only a few people to interview—and here I am two years later and we're still trying to finish it up.

MRR: So, what's everyone like? Did a lot of people from those days remain artists and weirdos, or did many proceed to lead more traditional lifestyles? It's probably a mix.
It's kind of a mix. A lot of people performing today started off in this scene. John Thomas Griffith, the guitar player for Cowboy Mouth, started out in the band the Rat Finks, which later became the Red Rockers, which was the most successful band to come out of the old scene.

MRR: After working on this film for a while, why do you think that punk rock has been underrated in New Orleans, then and now? Do you think it's the simple fact that we have more of a reputation for being a jazz town?
Well, I think if you look back, even Louis Armstrong wasn't appreciated when he was here. He very seldom came back to New Orleans after he was shunned by the city and its government. So, it's essentially the story of New Orleans music, from Louis Armstrong until today. Another thing is, New Orleans is a live music town rather than a recorded music town. People characterize New Orleans as a jazz town, but what kind of music did Fats Domino play?

MRR: Early rock'n'roll. That's a cool answer. When looking back on these punk histories, it's really common for bands to cite that an already established band came through town on tour and inspired the creation of a rash of new bands, and therefore a scene. Was that true for New Orleans?
No, in New Orleans it was a radio show, New Wave Hour on WTUL with Jay Hollingsworth and John G. That's what pretty much launched the scene, so that whenever a band would come—like the Ramones did and all these local bands would open for them. It started off with the Normals in about 1978-79, but then after that it was the Red Rockers who would open for bands around '81. The Cold were also popular in their own right. They were local celebrities at the time and would open for bands like Squeeze. I guess at the time the term "new wave" became synonymous with bands like Squeeze, but in '78 it was pretty much the same thing as punk.

MRR: Are you going to dive into '80s hardcore?
Oh, definitely because there are very important aspects of the early local hardcore scene, one being the notorious band the Sluts. The Sluts' frontman, Dave Turgeon, actually auditioned to front Black Flag before the job ultimately went to Henry Rollins. So, he actually performed one night with Black Flag in Philadelphia. Yeah, the Sluts were a pretty notorious band. They toured the country and they were punk rock in the sense of offending everybody and anybody, being really loud and really obnoxious and they really left their mark. As notorious as they were, I'm kind of shocked that they faded into obscurity. They had a lot of famous friends and a lot of famous non-friends, too. They existed to



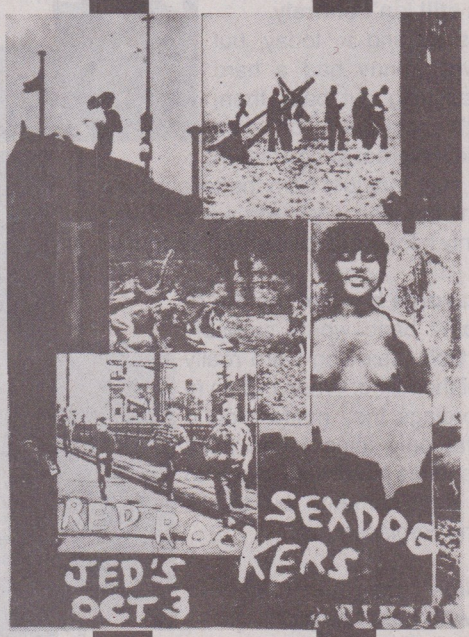


photo of Dave Turgeon (the Sluts) and Lenny Zenith (RZA) by Susan Indest.
photo of the Normals at the CAC by Kevin Combs, Kevin Combs is the artist/photographer best associated with The Normals (designed their logo, 45 sleeve, took most of the best knows photos of the band). To enquire about using his work, he can be reached at kev-com2001@hotmail.com.
The Sexdog/Red Rockers flyer was designed by Sexdog vocalist Rick Wigginton.

rile people up and they had a good three-year run before they couldn't take it anymore, so…

MRR: Are you talking to Ron from Disappointed Parents? I know they're still trying to play shows.
Yes, I talked to Ron. There was Disappointed Parents, the Goners and of course there was Shell Shocked in the mid-'80s from when hardcore/metal crossover started, and they were pretty much at the vanguard of that. That kind of started the underground metal scene in New Orleans, which today is still going strong. Mike IX of EyeHateGod was in a band called Teenage Waste at that point, but they were short lived and no recordings exist of them. In conclusion, yes, I went into hardcore, I cover a rockabilly band, everything from a band like the Cold to the Uptights and RZA, who were somewhere between punk and new wave. Their frontman Lenny Zenith was transgender at a time when that really wasn't acceptable in the music industry.

MRR: It still isn't entirely.
Well, it's starting to today, but that's why Lenny had a hard time branching out back then, and that's a real shame because I think he's a great songwriter in his own right, not just from the local scene, but I think from the whole era. Lenny Zenith is certainly a top-notch writer and performer.

MRR: Favorite band of the era?
My favorite band would probably be Sex Dog. Sex Dog were really ahead of their time. When I listen to the recordings they made around 1981, the only thing I can think of that sounds anywhere close to it is the Replacements, but this is before the Replacements.

MRR: Didn't they just reissue a record with Last Laugh?
Oh, you're thinking of Shit Dogs from Baton Rouge. Shit Dogs sounded a lot like the Ramones. Sex Dog… What you gotta realize is that most bands didn't even get a record out. Some of the best-known bands at the time never got a record out, like the Skinnies.

MRR: I wanted to ask if you talked to Larry Holmes since he was such a prolific figure back then with his bands, his label and the fanzine. Have you uncovered any copies of *Final Solution*?
Yes, I talked to Larry. There were a few zines… There was a zine called *Crispy Christ* that I think Ron Christ [of Disappointed Parents] used to put out. Yes, I tried to cover everything, because when you look at a movie like *American Hardcore*, you see [the touring bands] end up in all these cities where there was very much a division between the scenes. Everybody pretty much got along here.

MRR: There's so much punk nostalgia right now and everything you've said about the scene back then paints a pretty harmonious picture, but was there an ugly or difficult side to things at all? For instance, did punks have to clash with the police a lot?
Problems with the police came later with the hardcore scene. There are two punk/police clash stories in New Orleans that get a lot of attention, the first being when Sex Pistols played at the Kingfish in Baton Rouge in 1978. The other story is when the Misfits were arrested in St. Louis second cemetery after their show at Tupelo's Tavern in 1982. The cops were pretty rough with a lot of the underage people who were there. Mike IX [of EyeHateGod] was one of the kids arrested that night.

MRR: Have you heard stories about what it was like to look like a punk rocker and walk around the streets of New Orleans in the late '70s and early '80s?
People said that people would grab their kids and say, "Stay away from those people!" It's kind of funny now, you wouldn't give a second thought to someone with green hair. But if you were a punk at that time, people definitely looked down on you.

MRR: What about racial stuff? With a zine called *Final Solution* and the Toxin III logo and things like that, was overt racism actually a part of the scene?
There was [racist] imagery, mainly used for shock value. I talked to the guys in Toxin III and they said that in 1980 *Time* magazine declared the confederate flag to be the American swastika, so the point of their album cover was to make it recognizable. But if you listen to the lyrics, you'll see that they were a band with left wing politics, so they weren't a racist band. But I guess that people think, "Oh, a southern band that had that album cover must be racist." So, [in the documentary] I let them explain it their own way. I know that at least one of the "Punkette Pinups" for Larry Holmes' *Final Solution* fanzine was Jewish, as was the original drummer for Red Rockers who drummed on the EP released on Holmes' Vinyl Solution label. Even the LGBT community found acceptance in the New Orleans punk scene whereas gay bashing was the norm in other cities' scenes.

MRR: When do you think you'll be done filming and how are you planning on showing the documentary? Will it be out on DVD? Are you going to tour with it?
We're hoping for a release date sometime in 2014. We're thinking we'll maybe do the festival circuit, but we'll see. Oh, there's one more thing. There's rumored to be footage of the Sluts out there somewhere, so I guess I can use this as an opportunity to appeal to readers. If there's anyone out there with footage, please get in touch!

If you have any Sluts footage, or anything else that could help with the production of *Almost Ready: The Story of Punk Rock in New Orleans*, please write Al at: achampagne981@hotmail.com.

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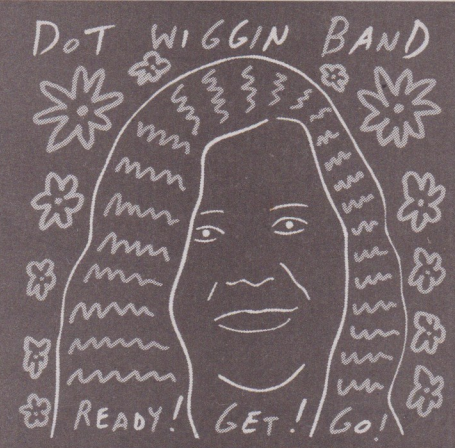

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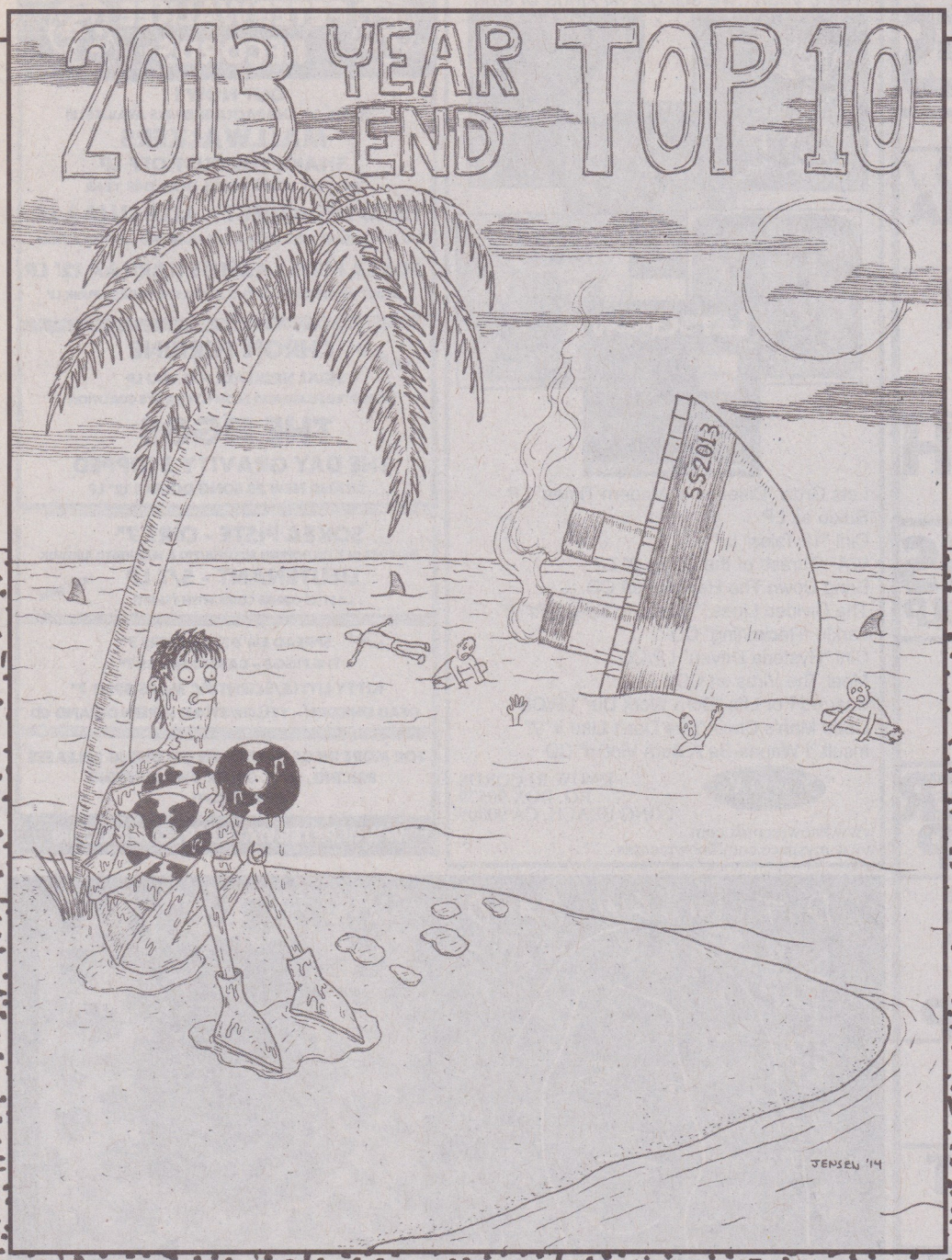
2013 YEAR END TOP 10



IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL SHITOWRKERS OF ALL KINDS AND PUNKS FROM ALL OVER THE GLOBE GIVE US THEIR YEAR END TOP TENS OF 2013. ENJOY!

DAN GOETZ

The number of truly great punk records coming out has been increasing again over the last few years, including some that re-piqued my interest in styles that I thought I was done with. While there were numerous worthy contenders for my top ten this year, I wanted to focus on a single list of ten records that defined 2013 for me. Sorry Framtid.

1. GAS RAG – "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment)
Best band in the US. This is what happens when you fuse TOTALITÄR riffs with *Pick Your King* drumming and instrument tones with scientific precision. Super stoked I'll be catching them at New York's Alright in April.

2. ABSURDO "Barcelona 92/Vacio" flexi (Discos Absurds)
The LP is great on its own, but this two song flexi, for being so simple, is somehow otherworldly. No matter how basic the riffs or cliché the guitar solo, if the band has enough heart and attitude, sometimes this can actually elevate the music. This is soundtrack to being caged up and knowing that you're missing out on amazing things happening pretty much everywhere else (such as this band playing a nighttime generator show in Barcelona).

3. INFERNÖH – "7 Spar" LP (Distort Reality)
This band's live set gave me a two-day bangover, and this LP/EP/who fucking cares still blows my mind with its perfection every time I hear it.

4. NEEDLES – "Desesperacion" EP (Iron Lung)
Twenty years into making music, some of the members of this band put forth some of their best material yet. I feel like the Prank/Burdette lineage starts to show a bit more on this record, as well.

5. V/A – "Land of Nod" LP (Scavenger of Death)
The comp medium has resulted in many classics and a landfills worth of one-listen garbaggio, but for some reason, 2013 saw a number of bangers, with this collection of current (or recently deceased) Atlanta bands—mostly well-kept local secrets—being the best of the bunch. No two bands on here are quite alike, but it's all top notch freak music.

6. HOUNDS OF HATE – 12" (Painkiller)
This band has been an obsession ever since I discovered them, and seeing them three times by January's end will make my year.

7. V/A – "Ground Zero NYC 2013" LP (Toxic State)
Another great comp showcasing a specific time and place.

8. DIVINE RIGHT – LP (Deranged)
This would've flown under my radar had I not gotten it for review, but thankfully I saw the light because this is a filthy doozy of an LP. Self-loathing D-beat, if you will, and "Pray for Me" is 2013's best dirger.

9. NO STATIK – "Unity and Fragmentation" LP (Iron Lung)
Their best stuff yet, and that's saying a lot.

10. BIG EYES – "Almost Famous" LP (Grave Mistake)
Slightly more spotty than their other records, but still something I listened to at least weekly this year.

HONORABLE MENTION

MINDSET – "Leave No Doubt" LP (React!)

While falling a bit short of the list of ten best, it's the best straight-up youth crew LP in over a decade. The "sincerity" put forth by these bands is virtually always some combination of naïve, artificially heroic, or in start contrast to how whoever penned them actually lives their life—plus they usually have more shirt designs than songs—but something about this band's words are able to make me feel something.

TOP TEN LIVE SETS (MINUS REUNIONS)

KRÖMOSOM at the Knockout
NUDES at Good Bellies
INFERNÖH at the Hidden Temple
GAG at the Oakland Metro
NEEDLES various places around town
LOTUS FUCKER at Good Bellies
Every RITUAL CONTROL set that I caught
COKE BUST at the Oakland Metro
THE RIVAL MOB at 1-2-3-4 Go! Records

TOP FIVE DEMOS (THAT I HEARD)

GAS RAG, MERCENARY, PIG DNA, TRENCHES, RITUAL CONTROL

BRYONY BEYNON

Repeated paragraphs on the greatness of the same coupla record will only serve to make you resent those records, so I skipped out on the objective to focus instead on some peaks. Weird, clashing, peaks. You know, songs you couldn't get out of your head, songs you spent secret time with, songs that became in-jokes between you and your mates. Bands you look forward to seeing no matter how often they play, bands you'd take sizeable financial risks for. Bands that stretch the meaning of punk or add something new, strange, dangerous; bands that replace pastiche with critique or deal in bald joy where bored cynicism has for too long been the currency. Here're ten, in no order.

SHOPPING – "Consumer Complaints" LP (Milk)

When three people who know how to write a goddamn tune decide to do a thing and do it hard, bands like SHOPPING are the result. Everyone's favourite. A joy to behold, very rarely do they play anything other than a mind-bogglingly tight set. Danceable post-punk is the general idea, but this LP stages an awe-inspiring coup against GENERAL IDEA and his lazy troops, marching them out the window, leaving you to bask in the warm post-revolutionary breeze that results, like the baleful but uplifting paean to love in exchange for cash, "For Your Money." Some professional music writer (they've been garnering that sort of attention recently) noted by way of a backhanded compliment that "what they lack in musical ability…" which blew my mind a bit, as SHOPPING contain three of the most "technically competent" musicians (as in, actual) active in London punk right now, but the fact that this fact is pretty much totally irrelevant says a lot about the spirit of the band.

FRUSTROS – "A L'attaque du Rien" 7" (Freak Out / Mutant / Tocsin)

I'm not sure how technically allowed this is, because I helped put out the tape version of this, but it was sort of an emergency accident because the single wasn't ready, and hey, I can't apologise for how great FRUSTROS are. A Lyonnais band with a sound that quite clearly did not come out of a summit meeting about which particular old bands they would attempt to replicate. This is clear for the main reason that it's a very hard sound to pin down. Rainy, resentful ballads of *La Crise*? A well oiled machine that runs on the tears of riot cops and the slow crumbling remnants of late capitalism? Or a warm mix of downbeat indie-punk that you'll hum for days? Apocalypse hymns. Whatever it is, I'm buying. Magnifique.

PRIESTS – "Personal Planes/Radiation" (Sister Polygon)

How to erupt. How to send possibilities hurtling through time and space. How not to read as throwbacks. How to rend a world of doubters asunder, melt them down with love into something a little more useful. How to be sharp, stay smart, throw off all restraint. How to write a perfect punk single. How to be PRIESTS.

LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Sex Pit" EP (Muckraker)

Active attempts to create a sense of "cult" come over all too often as nakedly desperate ploys for something to mask the weakness of cut-out songwriting. As though to invert that whole guff, LUMPY has created a little gooey universe so complete and easy to love that the music—hit-your-head-on-the-floor-and-grin-through-the-blood hardcore—would be secondary, and the band just a vehicle, if it weren't so bloody catchy. Raw joy. At the risk of plagiarising myself, sideswipe your dinner, laugh at your dog, 'cause you can't spell slime without "me."

FRAU – demo tape (Tuff Enuff)

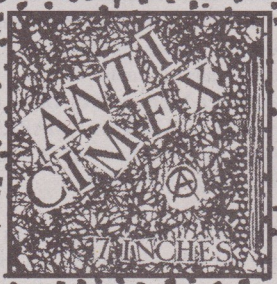
FRAU is half-Spanish half-British, an increasingly common melting pot combo for the bands of our broken continent for a whole host of reasons. Society suffers; punk benefits. It always starts with the big four: guitar/bass/drums/vox—simple elements of a periodic table that can still be hard to control; harder still to resist. FRAU upturns them all, repatched together in a way that hints at the intricate preparation of the haphazard, disguising the hard graft in reaching that perfect fall-apart sound, letting loose snapshots of perfect lo-fi oblivion, still somehow shout-along. Naturally hostile. Jumping bass, squealing anti-chords, stop-starts as communal challenge. The suggestion that we throw these things out into the world with careless abandon is a common punk lie, at least for those who care enough to put small flecks (or even sizeable chunks) of themselves into everything we do. Here're six tracks of the truth.

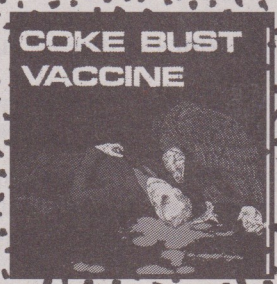
VIXENS – "Vixens" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)

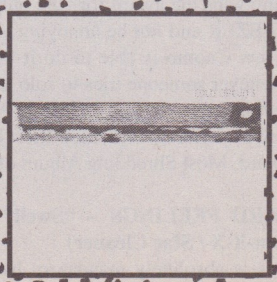
Their demo tape was a fucking revelation and of course this record absolutely slays, cleaned up slightly but without loss of hooks or charm. The subject matter does that quotidian concern handled with requisite bleeding gums; common threads, the same old shit every day. Hardcore detourned for catcallers, dickhead exes, humourless punk princes. (Obviously some old man reviewed this as "a triumph of will over talent," do we have a name for this genre of backhanded compliments yet?) No fear here of noisy breakdowns, desperate "ughs" aplenty in Josephine's throaty delivery, the fuck-you-buddy dirt all over the guitars, hiss and vinegar, plus the best femme-o BVs in the biz make this one of my most played of the year for sure.

SLEAFORD MODS – "Austerity Dogs" LP (Harbinger Sound)

SLEAFORD MODS is not a band that I have seen play many straightforward punk gigs (I would selfishly hope to see that change) but the two men that make them up push out what sounds like a hard-bastard mutant child of John Cooper Clarke, Mike Skinner and Mark E. Smith, over post-rave comedown bass. At it's core this is an LP of ostensibly rapped vocals (interestingly and bizarrely redubbed "poetry" by most reviewers, presumably because "hey, these men are







white...") spat out over bare bones bass. What is protest music? What is a protest? What is music? Human Hangovers. Tumescent propulsive R-A-G-E directed at boss. Directed at "that cunt with the gut and the Buzz Lightyear haircut, calling all the workers plebs." Subject position is working class autodidact, is shat-on precariat, is man without future, is gazed upon tabloid-baited "untermensch," is doomed not-so-youthful-youth, is meet me in the pub, is you're a cunt cunt cunt, is 'what have I done?' …Is hard to explain. Twelve perfectly incandescent observations from post-industrial towns where things were once made and now nothing much seems to grow. But *six* albums in, SLEAFORD MODS have proved the exception to this rule. Has such a timely expression of class hatred been spewed forth with anything like this level of integrity in the last fifteen years? I do not think so.

HOUSEHOLD – "Elaines" 12" (Dull Knife)
So much writing on punk, even at its widest reaches, speaks in a cartoon language of onslaught, all-out attack, never-ending rankings in an economy of "giving it your all." The inevitable conclusion of such an anger arms race is an army of artfully bloodied foreheads wading through canyons of useless cum. What, then, in all this, does it mean to hold back? To opt for raised eyebrows as killer weapons, sharp harmony as balled fist, cards pressed to chests instead, eeking out off-kilter melody, urgent, devastating truths in the long, neglected traditions of quiet punk? This new EP teaches the listener it is okay to be tired. It sits in grey spaces where there is no right answer and makes long low sounds punctuated by dizzying single notes, chirping, eager question marks. And when the absence of the usual methods of signifying rage and frustration serve only to amplify something deeper, angrier, scarier, even, well, it's there that HOUSEHOLD illustrate perfectly the possibility of restraint as radical practice, of everyday, as everything.

NO – "Great Space" 12" (Static Shock)
I've read it suggested that DISCHARGE was more art than band because of the way they stripped back each element to a sort of farcical sonic conclusion where speed, noise and voice-as-instrument become new tools for a kind of anti-music, proto noise. NO could be said to take these tools up, and sharpen them into something a little less blunt but no less damaging, capable of weird slippery sculpture that's deliberately obstreperous, twisting spasms that fall away from your grasp just as it seems like nodding along might not wind you up with concussion. In my last list like this I said I was excited for whatever they did next, and this record proves further they know exactly what they're doing with this format. It's darker and more expansive than their first 12" EP and the perfect length. America get wise, they're coming to you.

BIG MOUTH – "Sound" LP (Loon Balloon)
An antidote to much of the layers of pointless noise we've become accustomed to listening through in these dark times, the music of BIG MOUTH from Baltimore is foregrounded by Angela's rich, strong, and gravelly vocals. To suggest that having clearly audible vocals with interesting lyrics (when coupled with their off-kilter light/shade late-'80s-Dischord riffing) feels like a '90s conceit probably says a lot of about punk in 2013. I saw this band at Ladyfest Philadelphia in June and was completely floored. Grown adults in prom gear, thrashing their instruments in a spectacle that read like the inversion of all tired rockisms gone before. Indefinable mixed narrative vagaries shot through songs that take you to a place. Recorded at Inner Ear and it shows. BIG MOUTH comes off a little like Kat Bjelland from BABES IN TOYLAND fronting QUICKSAND, in that it is big, unapologetic and packed with full spectrum, multicolour aggression, awkward truths ("Wipe your own ass, don't measure my worth."). The fact that this is a reasonably unfashionable sound right now is all the more reason to lose yourself in it.

FRED SCHRUNK

RADIOACTIVITY – LP (Dirtnap)
Sure this sounds exactly like a MARKED MEN record (cause it kinda is). But it might be the *best* MARKED MEN record. Or at least it has better cover art than any past MARKED MEN record, (which isn't saying much, I know). Award: Most Catchy Album of 2013.

CREMALLERAS – LP (Cintas Pepe)
Raw and killer insanity. Two piece from Mexico (guitar and drums) that totally destroys. Everyone I have played this for has both never heard of them, and loved them instantly. Award: Most Devastating LP of 2013.

DARK RIDES – "Walk the Floors" LP (Do Ya Hear We)
I'm one of the few people that does not use the word "region-rock" as a swear word around *MRR*. And if you, my friend, also love the likes of HIDDEN SPOTS, FUTURE VIRGINS and ADD/C, well than perhaps this could be (or already is) one of your favorite records of the year. Award: Best Bedroom Jam 2013.

TONY MOLINA – "Dissed and Dismissed" 12" (Melters)
Tony wins the award for "the only person to rip off WEEZER and *not* be annoying about it." Not even Rivers Cuomo is able to do it these days. Usually whenever someone tries to solo this much, I greet it with large yawns and exuberant eye-rolls. But here, they fit perfectly into these short blazing fast songs. Award: Most Shredding Album of 2013.

HARD FEELINGS – "Swell" LP (Lost Cat / Plan-it-X / Star Cleaner)
This is absolutely mandatory listening for anyone out there with a HICKEY tattoo (of which there are many). Don't get them wrong; they're no wannabe HICKEY band. They just tug on those same brain strings and release the same endorphins as happens when you listen to HICKEY. These kids sound like they belong in the '90s Bay Area grungy pop punk scene. Super fun stuff. Award: Best new band that makes me nostalgic.

BED WETTIN' BAD BOYS – "Ready for Boredom" LP (RIP Society)
Could they have thought of a worse band name? Only BAD DADDIES and SLUT RIVER stand out as arguably worse. Yet these Aussies found a way to play REPLACEMENTS rock and totally destroy. Super fun album. I wonder what it was like when these guys each casually told their Moms what they'd decided on for a band name. Award: Best band most people will immediately dismiss based on their name in 2013.

CRIATURAS – "Espiritu de Libertad" 12" (Residue)
Maybe better than their first LP (which set my brain on fire). Completely manic. Completely destructive. Completely crucial. Award: Best album to not only match, but exceed extremely high expectations in 2013.

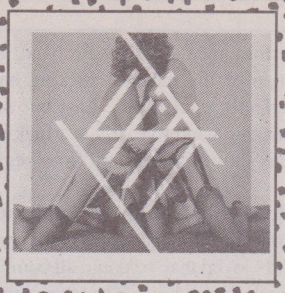
NEON PISS – "Close the Door/Burn" (Vinyl Rites)
Okay we all know these guys are just trying to be AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY, but fuck man, they are really good at it. Two of their best songs back to back here. A fitting swan song for a great band. Award: Best Dressed.

REPLICA – "Strings" EP (Prank)
Punk punk punk punk, punk punk punk punk (punk punk). Easily the best band in the Bay Area right now. From the moment the needle drops, you are sonically blasted with chaos. Brilliant stuff. Award: Most likely to suffer a pit-injury during the first song of their set (even when you're trying to avoid all those crazy teenagers).

FUNERAL CONE – "Peel Back the Foil" EP (100% Breakfast / Trotz Allem)
You know how most party bands are really annoying?!? Not the case with FUNERAL CONE. Anytime someone's wearing a headband I'm skeptical, but turns out, they totally rage! Punk rock lesson for today: Easiest way to win over a crowd instantly, is open up with "Louie Louie." And the record they made is every bit as fun as their show. Awesome stuff. Award: (they actually get two) Best live band. And best use of fake eye-glasses (come on man, we all know there's no lens in there).

IF THIS WAS A TOP 12 LIST I WOULD INCLUDE
VARIX *I Can't Get Out* EP (Fashionable Idiots), NOTS *Dust Red* EP (Goner).

AND WHO COULD FORGET
XYX *Teatro Negro* LP (Monofonus Press), PEEPLE WATCHIN' *Somethin' Ta Tell Ya* LP (Nervous Nelly), RATS REST demo tape, APOGEE SOUND CLUB / SHELLSHAG split EP (Thrillhouse), BAD DADDIES *Bad Year* EP (Central District), ANDROIDS OF MU *Blood Robots* LP (Free Wing / Water Wing), UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE *Observant Com El Mon Es Destrueix* LP (La Vida Es Un Mus), COLD CIRCUITS *Remote User* EP (Erste Theke Tonträger), AGATHA / DOGJAW split 12" (Rumbletowne), SKINNY GIRL DIET *DMT* EP (self-released), LAS OTRAS *Devolver El Golpe* LP, PLEASURE LEFTISTS 12" (Deranged).



OSCAR GUTIERREZ

This was such a great year for punk, specifically for the formation of new bands. While compiling this list, all I could think of was demos! I listened to so many demos this year and I probably only got a bundle of shitty ones, which is actually really great compared to 2012. I did, however, put some of the records that made me reenact Selena's dance moves at shows and in my room.

I want to thank all the punks that supported MRR *and created more space for punk. I want to thank folks that made the Bay Area feel not so shitty and all those who welcomed me back to LA to fuck shit up. I want to make sure that we recognize what has to be done coming 2014. I saw the emergence of some amazing bands of color, queer and trans folks in punk, and a lot more intentional punk spaces, however the work is still lacking. 2014 calls for more releases by folks in those categories and a lot more spaces for this to happen. I want to highlight folks doing amazing work such as E. 7th St Warehouse in LA, Think and Die Thinking Collective, Lady Fest LA, LA punks in general, Verdugo Discos,* MRR*, women, queer, and trans folks picking up instruments and mics, and especially all the punks of color in the Bay and LA area holding it down.*

Of course, to sum up the year in ten records is nearly impossible for me, but these give a slight look into some of the titles I loved in 2013. If I could have a top 30, that would be appropriate. Thank you! Viva la raza cabrones!

GENERACION SUICIDA – "Con La Muerte a Tu Lado" LP (Going Underground)
I have to admit, I saw GENERACION SUICIDA when they were just starting and I was hooked. I got their demo and instantly thought of a sound very similar to MASSHYSTERI, but later realized that GENERACION SUICIDA was on their own style. It's hands-down one of my favorite sounds. The clarity in the duality of vocals on this LP made the whole album something enjoyable. From start to finish, this makes me want to dance through my room like a dumbass, and I will dance all the way through 2014 with this one for sure.

CATHOLIC SPIT – "A Pact with the Devil" 12" (Bad Touch)
I could not stop talking about this LP. I saw the band a while back in LA and I was instantly stuck with their spooky death punk rock. Their sound is something that instantly completed a part of my 2013 favorites. The sound is killer, the recording is great and they have it all together so well that it hurts my brain. Up the spooky punx forever. Y ¡Que vivan los darkz!

PESADILLA DISTOPIKA – "No Hay Ninguna Manera De Eskapar" EP (Verdugo)
These dudes rule so hard and I basically stormed their Bandcamp page until I could get my hands on a hard copy of the EP. This EP hits hard tune after tune, and it did not stop being superb at any point. I had received the PESADILLA DISTOPIKA demo prior to this record and lost it during a tragic move to the Bay Area. I knew this was the shit from the moment I listened to it and I can still say the same. With some dope cover art by Alex Heir, this EP is made to perfection. This record for sure makes me want to sock some fools in the face.

GAG – "This Punk Shit Is Cool But I Hope I Am Rob Zombie When I Am 28" 12" (Bedside)
I am kind of in love with this record. I obsessively listen to it every other day and I feel like a creeper for it. It's hard not to be hooked to this after seeing GAG perform, it's some crazy shit that I am sure would make someone like Sakevi Yokoyama proud. It's the type of record that makes me want to punch a wall and regret it after the record is over. This is by far one of the best things to grace my record player this year.

LAS OTRAS – "Devolver El Golpe" LP (Discos Sense Nom)
It's LAS OTRAS, and honestly I could just leave this at that. I was excited when this band came around the Bay and LA and I was even more excited knowing they had this release with them. This Spanish all-women punk band will put some bros to shame. I loved it all and much like all of the records on this list, I have an inseparable relationship with this LP that I hope doesn't end anytime soon.

TOZCOS – demo (Overdose)
I saw this band play for the first time only last week. I had heard so much talk about how fucking awesome they were but did not even have the tape to check out there stuff. Their performance was just as amazing as the tape I got that day. I love when a band can produce a recording that is nearly identical to a great performance. This band is doing it all very well and there was no doubt that this tape was going among my favorites for the year.

PERMANENT RUIN – "Más Allá de la Muerte" EP (Warthog Speak)
I can't say it enough, but I love PERMANENT RUIN. They were among one of the first bands I saw when moving to the Bay Area and they made me not regret my decision at the time. This is one of the most hard-hitting bands I have ever listened to and there is no doubt about that. This new EP came at perfect timing and gave me energy to want to do damage. I can't even fully begin to explain how important this band and this EP are. If you haven't paid attention to this band yet, do so in 2014 or get out the way!

REPLICA – 12" (Prank)
This band is fucking awesome, but they honestly don't need anyone's approval because I am sure they know they are badass. REPLICA released their first self-titled LP this year and they served us with some of the meanest hardcore punk I have listened to. This LP combined with the energy brought through their live performances proves that REPLICA is doing it all right. I am really hoping to hear more from this band in 2014.

GAS RAG – "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment)
GAS RAG is fucking awesome and this EP can prove it. I seriously just want to fuck shit up with this one. It's just fucking sick, perfectly executed and it's recorded to perfection. I want to see this band play forever and I want this shit to play at my funeral. This band in general was a highlight for me in 2013, no doubt about that.

V/A – "Not Normal Presents… Welcome to 2013" LP (Not Normal)
I have to finish this off with this compilation. This year brought some amazing music, and a lot of it is on this compilation alone. Not Normal Tapes completely brought it with this compilation of bands that basically hit hard. This record played constantly when I got it and little has changed since then. This record is already in the second pressing and everyone should own it. I am probably going to buy another one, put it in some type of vault and release it if I ever fuck up the current copy I have from overplaying it. It's just that good, no bullshit.

TOP THREE LIVE SHOWS AND BANDS
E. 7th St. Punx One-Year Anniversary with VAASKA, IMPALERS, GRIMA, KRUEL, DAMAGES, DESTRUYE Y HUYE, BLAZING EYE and MAL PASO at 7th St. Punx Warehouse, Los Angeles
By far the most amazing show I have been to in a really long time. E. 7th St. Punx are doing an amazing job at holding down this amazing space. This lineup was perfect and included nearly everyone I love in the Los Angeles punk

scene. I want to start by highlighting BLAZING EYE. This band is amazing and they get the crowd moving without hesitation. DESTRUYE Y HUYE are favorites; if the tape was released in 2013, it probably would have gone on here. They had an incredibly wild set at this show. The dancing was intense and punks were happy. Finally I want to highlight GRIMA; this amazing band is such a pleasure to see live. Their music is greatly appreciated and I was glad I got to see them pause their set, bring in the new year with a bunch of punks as balloons, silly string, fireworks and alcohol filled the room, and then continue bringing in the new year raging. This was by far the *best* show of 2013, no doubt about it.

GAG, NEEDLES and PERMANENT RUIN at The Oakland Metro
A lineup made in satan's workshop. This show was wild, amazing and plain fun. All bands served, starting with PERMANENT RUIN's in-your-face performance. This whole band is a bundle of badass. NEEDLES, bringing some of the meanest fucking hardcore punk in the Bay Area and starting perfectly circled pits. Last but definitely not least, GAG. They are such an amazing band live. It's just fucking crazy and I don't know how to explain it. This show was on point from beginning to end.

This Is Not A Step Fest (all bands) at 924 Gilman
Honestly, all bands were really amazing. I loved every moment of this festival and I loved that we could all come together to remember and keep the legacy of Sarah Kirsch alive! The stories and conversations that happened at this festival were extremely heartwarming and reminded us that it's not just music. We all found punk for various reasons and we need to keep those intentions set. I came home after the last day of the fest with popped ear and a warm feeling inside. It was kind of amazing.

JENNI EMANCYPUNX

2012 was an awesome year and the whole of 2013 was blessed as well when it came to HC punk. In my bones I feel that 2014 will be maybe even better, if this process goes on like that. Especially when it comes to female fronted, feminist HC punk there is a bunch of awesome bands and I hope there is more to come...

1. REPLICA – "Strings" EP (Prank)
I feel like REPLICA is sort of a new step. Dharma's voice archives a level of brutality for which I have been waiting for many, many years... The line-up is excellent; you can hear it in the music. Their music isn't that heavy or fast, but it still all sounds quite brutal and aggressive. It's not completely out of control, but a sort of conscious and controlled way of being pissed off, and it's even more impressive. Worldwide bigots: be aware! REPLICA did not say their last word yet, there are new recordings due in 2014.

2. CATHOLIC SPIT – "A Pact with the Devil" 12" (Bad Touch / Crapoulet)
CATHOLIC SPIT are my dark and coldwave-ish punk superheroes. The combination of their lyrics and music is hilarious. For me their sound is pretty unique. Supposedly a big reason for that is a weirdly distorted synthesizer. They change speed and rhythm, so that there's a dramaturgy to their sound. It's a record you need to hear several times, as it keeps its secrets and surprises thanks to the overlapping sounds. The album is a concept album and you wont find any repetition, which is pretty rare! Unlike with some "cold" punk revival bands, I somehow feel they might mean what they sing. That's why I'm a bit scared to play that record too often in order not to provoke the evil. Imagine that while visiting your dentist, you find out she has a pact with the devil! That's no fun. They call it death punk and I'm doomed to listen.

3. BIG EYES – "Almost Famous" LP (Grave Mistake)
This record by BIG EYES (out of Seattle) is maybe even their best one. BIG EYES presents a mix between punk, pop, rock and maybe a bit of blues, there are also some melodic punk parts. The guitarist and singer of the band is extraordinary; her guitar seems to be a natural extension of her body. The lyrics are a lot about personal stuff and relationship problems I can't really relate to that much, but it's still cool to listen to, as it transports a certain feeling of happiness combined with the knowledge that life isn't always easy. It creates this impression of a large amazing world still to discover (even if so many parts of it suck). So it's something a punk can listen to, while riding a bike trough a spring landscape or sailing on the ocean (or at least imaging doing this, while eating dumpstered food). One hit follows another hit, and another and it goes like that until the end of the LP... This band is a great proof that music has not come to any sort of end yet.

4. CERCE / STRESSCASE – split EP (Mayfly)
The girl on vocals for CERCE sort of got outta control. Let's call it power violence, but... unlike most powerviolence bands the vocals are really awesome. The CERCE guitar sounds extremely distorted, and the singer's voice sounds like it's naturally distorted as well. It's sweet and brutal at the same time. Imagine someone who used to be a nice person, baking cupcakes for everyone, but than this person got angry, very *very* angry (hello to *Equalizing-X-Distort*). As mentioned it's a type of powerviolence with rhythm changes etc, but there are funny distorted chugga-chugga parts in it. Those parts I like less, but in combination with the unpredictable character of the music it's becomes interesting and I can handle it. Boston, you're a lucky town to have those folks around there. STRESSCASE is fucking awesome as well. They are more brutal than CERCE.

5. COKE BUST – "Confined" 12" (Grave Mistake / Refuse)
An annihilation machine. No hope and no remorse for humanity. Bombardment of percussion. Great slower parts, that make you think about how things could go so bad. This HC punk is totally disillusioned. Does this mean, that the more the world sucks the better punk is? At least COKE BUST proves that's the case in this matter.

6. GOVERNMENT FLU / POISON PLANET – split EP (Refuse)
GOVERNMENT FLU is a great band out of the Polish hardcore scene which plays fast raw hardcore, and definitely deserves to find a spot in the top ten. POISON PLANET from the USA builds a dirty wall of sound, so fast that you can't stop it.

7. RAD – "Loud and Fast" LP (Phonoselect / Sacramento)
Wow, there's this awesome female fronted band from the '80s I've never heard of before!! That's what I thought when I first listened to this record. I really thought it was a reissue of some old band. Even when I was thinking about my Top 10 of the year I skipped RAD first, as they were in my mind as a band from a different period. Anyway this is really a compliment. Wanna have some great, fast '80s HC? Here you are!

8. LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golpe" LP (Discos Sense Nom)
Sincere anarchist feminist punk out of the country where the revolutionary women's organization Mujeres Libres fought for a better society in the thirties. In LAS OTRAS this spirit of a long lasting anarchist tradition is still alive. Their music is in the vein of raw Spanish punk rock.

9. LAST WORDS – LP (To Live a Lie)
Another fast HC punk band with an animal gone wild on vocals. LAST WORDS serves a dirty sound, leaving you just a short time to breathe and then the furious act goes on.

10. 1981 – "In the Dead of the Night" EP (Profiteer / Stonehenge)
Peace-punk style band out of the Finnish punk rock town Turku. Their best song ever is definitely "Silence" from their split 7" w/ Surrender from 2011, but this EP is a nice one too and suitable for singing along with. Unlike the aforementioned bands like COKE BUST, 1981 seems to gather people who might have at least a little bit of hope in humanity. But you can't call it hope-punk, as world peace seems a fiction even for today's peace-punks.

BEST REISSUES

NEIGHBOURHOOD BRATS *No Sun, No Tan* 12" (Deranged / Gummopunx), SADO-NATION *Disruptive Pattern* LP (Gummopunx), NEO BOYS *Sooner or Later* 2xLP (K / Mississippi), NATIONS ON FIRE *Strike the Match* LP (Kidnap).

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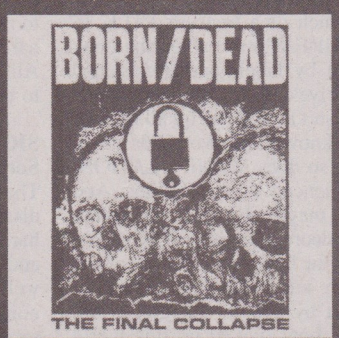

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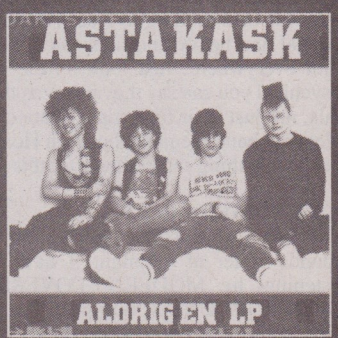

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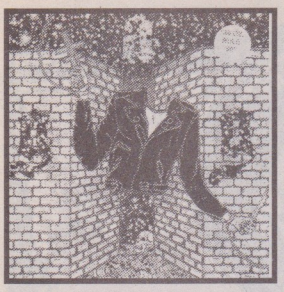


VIKTOR VARGYAI

I'm not following orders here, I just wanted to include things that were the best in 2013. It's lame because of how few non-USA bands have made the list. Bands from all over the world send me your stuff. I don't wanna miss the good materials this year. vargyai.viktor@gmail.com

TOP 4 – LP:
GUN OUTFIT – "Hard Coming Down" (Post Present Medium)
GUN OUTFIT sounds like music I have already heard but actually I have never heard such music. GUN OUTFIT makes me recall memories I wish I just had. They bring me to places where I haven't been or just wish to go back there. They write songs about life but everything sounds better through their music. It's so real and magical at the same time. Every one of their records is better than the one before and every one of their new record is their best. This band is amazing. Dream punk.

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Observant Com el Mon Es Destrueix" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This Catalan band carries the torch of amazing reverb Spanish hardcore. Gathering psychotic and psychedelic rotten sounds, mixing it with larger than life beats and channeling through dirty basements. Sometimes the guitars tell you more than the singer's howled angst. It's a manic stuff for acid freak hardcore fans.

HOAX – (self-released)
I did not believe the hype. Although I have found myself watching them live on YouTube at nights. There was something in the singer's eyes that was more frightening than his bleeding forehead. By doing this, their sound has grown on me and luckily the LP is nothing to get used to. From the first second it's the perfect echo of the vandalism this world is doing against the misfit crowd. So they turned it up against the victimizers. It's pure alienation, suffering, desperation and running into the wall with nothing to lose. The songs sound as crucial and heavy and noisy as possible, there is filth everywhere. Just look on the cover, it's so psychical you can say they put even their body into this, not just their fingertips. I hate cheap shots as bleeding band members but with Hoax that should be the last thing remember after this LP.

LIFE STINKS – (S.S.)
For some reason proto- and post-punk sounds better at midnight. I have spent nights listening to MODERN LOVERS, VELVET UNDERGROUND's "European Son," early PERE UBU and the FALL. LIFE STINKS sounds even at midday as if you were listening to these bands' best songs at midnight. While you can hear these influences, they are adding some indescribably new to their sound. Could it be the distorted bass, the desolated feelings, anything. They do not joke but it's not as artsy as it could be. More like cool punks trapped in a gallery for a weekend, trashing paintings, skating on sculptures, never sleeping. Sooo good!

TOP 10 – 12":
SOCIETY NURSE – (Iron Lung)
This year many bands have succeeded with writing a full length hardcore record. SOCIETY NURSE stands out with their disgusting, threatening, destruction-filled, never resting music. The vocals are angry as hell, the guitars remind me to MECHT MENSCH, I wanna run around and fall to the bass bridges or whatever the fuck it's called when hardcore music gets really groovy between two fast parts. This record is pure rage, a beautiful piece of falling apart punk hardcore.

BROKEN PRAYER – (Sorry State)
I've never been so friendly with the idea that punk needs progression. I like how diverse it is with its million sub-genres, but I felt no need from the music I love to progress. What BROKEN PRAYER does is a bit of progression for me, using keyboards in hardcore/punk and leading their songs into something different, which is closer to slackerish indie rock. It might sound horrible, but they are not just failing with it, but doing something amazing. If you ever wondered how would WRANGLER BRUTS sound with a keyboard here you are. This is so well thought out, really something different, while it still has the essences of punk in its core. Amazing.

VIXENS – (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Visceral noise, ideas from all around, whatever happens has to happen. I only heard this album two weeks ago but since then it can't disappear from my playlist. Amazing rage, collapsing since forever but from these life ruins they build walls wherein assholes are not allowed to be. Total VOID worship, don't be a fool, this rules!!

MANIPULATION – (Sorry State)
I don't know how much of a treasure TALK IS POISON and DEATHREAT were when the punk scene was influenced by labels and trends, and not by bands themselves. Those dark medieval times, when there wasn't a blog run by all of your housemates. But I do know these two bands above are fucking cool and so does MANIPULATION, who are heavily influenced by such bands. And CITIZENS ARREST maybe. I love hardcore but many times I love hardcore more played by punks, by freaks, by people in boots and not sneakers. It's hard because they are so fucking angry, not because they are hurt by people changing a bit, but because they see how fucked up this world is. MANIPULATION is this, it's punk music but punker than punk. Put it on and burn your local police station.

TONY MOLINA – "Dissed and Missed" (Melters)
#1 thing for 2013? Getting together with my girlfriend. #2 for 2013? Listening to this album after failed dates and in drunken loneliness.

NO – "The Great Space" (Static Shock)
Don't know what triggered the chaps of UK to form amazing hardcore bands, like, every second day, but NO is easily winning this hard game, with putting out such a ragger. What the fuck is this? This is faster than high quality amphetamine. Put together the fastest songs of SIEGE, some outer space noisy guitar parts and a bit of DYS and play it on 90 rpm.

FLESH WORLD – (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I trust Jess Scott. I'm a huge fan of BRILLIANT COLORS, loved the INDEX tape and this is nothing less than the previously mentioned bands. This is dreamy, reminds me of the weird and uncategorized feelings of NZ guitar bands, but it's punk music for those who are fine with weekends spent alone in their rooms, having fun in their own world, for travelers with no direction. The whole sound gives me the feelings of spinning. This band is something new, something different, something amazing!

STOIC VIOLENCE – (Katorga Works / Video Disease)
Are they humans? This is raging hardcore punk played really well. Still, there is something more pushing every sound from the speakers; jumping at you, pulling you down. They play this music as the angriest people in the world. It's good when not only the music sounds angry and fast, but the people behind it are too.

PLEASURE LEFTISTS – (Deranged)
I'm not a huge fan of this goth new and dark wave of punk that is the huge thing nowadays. I though PLEASURE LEFTISTS fell into this trend as well, but I was sooo wrong. They do sound like post-punk, but it's more like they used tamed punk to raise the tension. Outsider music, while it's not hard to listen to, but kinda hard to understand. Alienated voices from a gloomy world. Can't wait to host them in my room. They deserve my pizza!

SICKOIDS – "No Home" (Grave Mistake / Sorry State)
The sonic hymn-ness of HÜSKER DÜ has disappeared. The raging aggression of Midwest hardcore stayed. It got mixed with Japanese speed and a bit of noise. Guitars are used amazingly well, pedal core. The pace and part changings are unique. It took some time for me to get used to this record, but they still are a hardcore/punk power house, raging nerds. Also, Eric has become my ball brother in 2013 so there you go!

GAG – "This Punk Shit is Cool But I Hope I Am Rob Zombie When I Am 28" (Bedside)
They were the band of 2013. Hope they will come

out with a LP soon. This is infantile hardcore/punk with catchy hooks that makes me wanna be at basements shows where I can lose my shit. At the same time they remind me of SSD and NO TREND. Puke punk on your shoulder.

TOP 4 – EPs:
GOOD THROB – "Culture Vulture" (Muscle Horse)
Loved their previous 7" and this is no different. The conscious rage of CRASS (or just the accent—not sure) the heaviness of NEGATIVE APPROACH and the weirdness of DESPERATE BICYCLES. Get this foolz!

WHITE WARDS – "Paint Huffer" (self-released)
All right, so I haven't heard this but I did hear the upcoming LP of what this is a sneak peak. The LP will be the best thing in 2014, so whatever, just from that this is pure gold. Get into this or get out. Nah, not really; stay even if you don't like this.

DIÄT – "Everyday/Hinge and Bracket" (Iron Lung)
Picked their first 7" blindly from a distro after everyone said they are amazing and I saw too many people wear their shirts. One of the best decisions of 2013. This EP is gold too. So desolated, frustrating and distant. Post-punk songs that remind me of the second half of the first SODS LP. Sometimes spooky, mostly slackerish paranoia. Even if there's no tomorrow this makes the present better.

DIE – "Life is Hate" (Sonic Terror Discs)
Just as NO, DIE is delivering amazing hardcore/punk from the UK. A tsunami of threatening angst. Seems like some DYS represses have landed in the Kingdom because they too remind me of that band. The guitars are crying, the drums are ignorant enough, there is feedback and slow bass lines. Greatest record for stomping in the loneliness of my room.

TOP 5 – DEMO TAPES:
DEFORMITY
Wow. Most of the bands I like are influenced by the early '80s hardcore, but they do play and sound better. This demo could have been made in the glory days, it's so pure, full of real rage, mutant sounds and the rock'n'roll vibe. This is not garage rock but among the high speed, distorted, misplayed notes there are things that are what make music the best thing. After sex and drugs.

IVY
An all-star band with weird-as-fuck noise. This tape sounds like it was recorded by a tape deck smashed on the opposite end of the room. Still I can hear everything. Mostly that they know what makes a punk band great and unique. Nasty shit, just the way I like it.

THE SMEAR
I thought I had had enough of pop-garage-punk. I bet this band has some connection to MARKED MEN. If not they are that essential too. Take RAMONES, MISFITS, WIPERS and mix them together, make them sound like only you get what they did and create something new from them. Oh wait, you are too late, the SMEAR has already done this.

LOVE INTEREST
Again, I don't like modern day goth punk. But this band if recreating feelings not clichés of a genre. There's a party in your room, with pills and dystopian novels but you haven't invited anyone. This is good if you can relate to gloom.

AJAX
High-speed hardcore punk not influenced by Oi! but by skinhead violence. I can't type more about them; they make me trash my room and pick a fight with my neighbors. They play something that's not unique but they are playing it uniquely well.

TOP 4 – REISSUES:
URINALS – "Negative Capability" 2xLP (In the Red)
URINALS is the band. I love them. They are essential for my life. You know how they sound. You have felt how they sound. You picked up a guitar and wished to create something they did. It didn't happen, still you did something cool. URINALS URINALS URINALS. Now you can buy all their songs on vinyl. ACK ACK ACK!

NEO BOYS – "Sooner or Later" 2xLP (K)
They say punk is for outsiders. But mainly it's just white, middleclass males who are depressed. Most of the times because they are single, or young and clueless. So when the real outcasts of this world play punk, it's something different, it's more real and whatever they do it fits just right. NEO BOYS were girls making noise and this is just great. As the record goes further and I hear more songs it just grows on me. People recreating their own universe. This is real!

DIVISION FOUR – "1983 Demo Cassette" 12" (Smartguy)
What a treasure. It took some time until I realized this is really from 1983. It brought me the same feelings as when I heard DEATH for the first time. DIVISION FOUR is futuristic amphetamine Oi!, played by scared weirdoes. It sounds like Kubrick hired them to score *Clockwork Orange II* but the whole project failed, so this demo landed in a box. How could we live without this? Who knew about it? Why wasn't anybody told anything? One of the best things…*ever*!!!

DEEP WOUND – "I Saw It" EP (Armageddon Shop)
Perfect, awkward, teenage bedroom noise. Totally geek band of virgins who locked themselves in basements to release their angst. It happened and it turned out super fast, falling apart, distorted chaos. Why am I describing this to you? If you don't know them why do you care about me? This 7" is better than whatever I've done.

KENNY KAOS

OK, here's the deal. It's now 2014 and we're reflecting on 2013 and the year in music. Things are going to be a little different this year. How's that? First, I'm not going to start off my 2013 list with a video, though there is a video that will get singled out. Second, I think in the past I've avoided selecting the single best record of the year. That changes this year. Here they are, starting with the absolute best record of the year, followed by nine runners-up in no particular order.

BIG EYES – "Almost Famous" LP (Grave Mistake)
These guys kicked my ass with their first LP, *Hard Life*, and also with their *Back from the Moon* 7", which made my Top Ten of 2012. My Top Tens, whether it's month-to-month or Year End, tend to be filled with 7" records. I joke that I don't have the attention span for an LP and there is some truth in that. I find that most LPs have at least some filler and I have trouble getting past that filler. That is not the case here. This one's got eleven cuts and there isn't a loser in the group—seriously. If you're a fan of punk rock that is melodic and catchy, but also biting and driving, you owe it to yourself to go find this one. Buy the record. If you're one of those tech-savvy kids, download it. Shit, steal it if you have to. Maybe it's because they're from Seattle, or maybe it's because they're female-fronted, but I always come back to the FASTBACKS when I talk about these guys. Honestly, I feel like that description doesn't do either band justice. They're young and they're a little nerdy, which makes them even more punk in my mind. And if you ever get the chance to see them live, you'll see one of the tightest trios around. This is my new favorite band.

GLITZ – "It'z Glitz" 12" (Grazer)
I'm guessing that most of you, even the youngsters, are familiar with the whole "BEATLES or STONES?" game. It's the eternal question: Do you lean towards BEATLES-influenced music or ROLLING STONES-influenced music? I was always a BEATLES guy. Don't hate me, it's just how I grew up. I blame my parents (and not just for this). The guys in GLITZ were clearly STONES guys. I mean, they were *clearly* STONES guys, which makes me wonder why I like this record so much. Still, they're rock stars and Bobby Martinez likes it, so who am I to argue?

PRIMITIVE HEARTS – "High and Tight" 12" (FDH)
While new and clever and interesting are fine, sometimes you just need some high-quality melodic punk rock to help you get through the day. I think the PRIMITIVE HEARTS must have grown up on a steady diet of the RAMONES and '50s/'60s doo-wop. Seriously, if you just imagine those two influences, you'll have a pretty good idea of what to expect. What you won't necessarily expect is just how perfectly they pull it off. "Hey, hey harmony…" (Honestly, there is more to it, but that's all you really need to know.)

POPPETS – "Steal It Like a Thief" 12" (FDH)
There is something that is unmistakably Northern European about this band. They've got a catchiness that just oozes Northern Europe. Some might say Germany, others Scandinavia. If you said Sweden, you'd be right. This has got my name written all over it. It's catchy as all hell and almost forces you to bounce your head. It's mid-tempo. Despite the fact that they use a drum machine,

it is decidedly lo-fi. I can't say I'm a huge fan of the drum machine thing, but I do like that they're not afraid to use it. There is something I really like about bands just doing their thing and not worrying about whether it's punk or cool or whatever. It's got the male/female vocals thing going for it. On top of all that, all nine songs are under three minutes long. How could I not like it? (That was a sort of rhetorical question.)

GOOCH PALMS – "Novo's" LP (Anti-Fade)
This Australian duo has been wowing me since I first heard their *RU4Sirius* EP. That was but an introduction. What really got me going was their "Cucaracha" video, which I still could watch over and over and over again. This is their first full-length and they take the opportunity to introduce a few different sounds and also allow Kat to share the vocal spotlight with Leroy. While the record starts off with the anthem-like "We Get By," that one remains an anomaly. Mostly, these guys are barebones, lo-fi garage rock. I get the sense that they don't really give a fuck what people think about them. They make the music they like. Don't get me wrong, I think they want people to like and appreciate their music, but I don't get the sense that they are out to impress anybody. If you get the chance, check out the video for "We Get By." It's like a little window into who they are.

THE #1s – "Sharon Shouldn't" EP (Alien Snatch)
This one gets in there twice, once for being the best 7" of the year, the other for the best video of the year. First, let me just say that I have a particular fondness for the 7" single format. To be clear, a 7" single has one song on the A-side, and one—maybe two—songs on the B-side. This is perfect for my attention span. When you get a power pop number as catchy as "Sharon Shouldn't," attention span becomes a complete non-issue. Seriously, this song is so goddamn catchy that even a crusty would fall in love with it. From Ireland, these guys are out to continue the long tradition of great power pop from the island nation and they succeed admirably. And if the song isn't catchy enough on its own, the video makes it clear that the band is thoroughly enjoying what they're doing. Good for them. I mean, sure, we're punk and all that, but shouldn't music, at least every once in a while, just be fun?

SUGAR STEMS – "Can't Wait" LP (Dirtnap)
My street cred is going to take a hit for this one. It ain't punk. It really ain't. It's pretty pop music. It reminds me of the BANGLES and the B-52'S and the GO-GO'S, and not only because it's female-fronted. It also reminds me of the SALVATION ARMY and the THREE O'CLOCK and FLYING COLOR. If you happen to remember that first wave of pop bands that was born from the punk movement, you'll get the connection. And while the pretty vocals pair perfectly with the pretty pop music, when you throw in lyrics which are not always pretty and easy, you get an even better result. To be clear, Bobby Martinez does not approve this message.

MUJERES – "Soft Gems" LP (Sones)
Interesting and punk don't always go well together. In fact, it's often a recipe for disaster, if you ask me. Once in a while, however, you do come across a punk band that really is interesting, even within the confines of punk music. MUJERES is definitely one of those bands. On the one hand, they're all over the board, incorporating twang, swamp, pop, surf, punk, folk and more. On the other hand, they tie it all together very nicely to create their own sound, which is ultimately sort of folky and punky. It is driving, extremely melodic and almost rowdy, with a sort of spooky underlying base. It seems on the verge of exploding from time to time, but they always manage to maintain control. It's controlled rowdiness. To compare them to DAVILA 666 is possibly over simplistic, if only because they are both from Spanish speaking countries, with DAVILA 666 coming from Puerto Rico and MUJERES coming from Barcelona, but I think the comparison is valid. And, yes, I think it's funny to refer to both Puerto Rico and Barcelona as countries.

BLACK AND WHITE – "We Like Noise/No Reply" (Hardcore Survives)
This is punk rock. It's punk rock like straight out of the UK in 1977. Even the label makes a reference to the record being published in 1977. Except that it isn't from the UK and it isn't from 1977. It's from the motherfuckin' Japan and from 2013. The Japanese don't do anything half-assed. If they're gonna do a record meant to capture the sound and spirit of the UK and from 1977, you're gonna believe it could have come from the UK and from 1977. Specifically, it reminds me of some of the rawer and more up-tempo stuff produced around 1977, like SATAN'S RATS and EATER. Some might say that this is just an imitation. Possibly. But one thing you can't imitate is a sense of urgency and this one has that.

BIG EYES / MEAN JEANS – split EP (Dirtnap)
I'm not typically a big fan of the split 7". For me, the formats seem to lack a purpose. Usually, it's just two bands that may have little or nothing in common sharing space on a record. So what's the point? Are you just too cheap to put out your own record? Worse, do you not have enough material? When treated with some thought, however, the split EP can be pretty cool. In this case, for instance, each band does an original and also covers one song by the other band. I know this isn't an original concept, but it's a good way to give the split EP a purpose. In this case, you've got two of my favorite bands, which makes the execution of the concept even better. Better still? Both the BIG EYES' cover of the MEAN JEANS song and the MEAN JEANS' cover of the BIG EYES song are awesome. I mean, the cover versions are seriously awesome. So, in this case the split 7" format goes from being sort of "blah" to being pretty great.

FELIX VON HAVOC

Some really good stuff came out this year. Again I was hard pressed to narrow it down to ten releases. See my column this month for some of the runners up.

PARANOID – "Hardcore Addict" EP (Phobia / Rawmantic Disasters)
I am a hardcore addict! This was originally a demo tape I could not take out of the tape deck in my car, just kept letting it flip over and over. Raw Swedish hardcore done right, super powerful and catchy. The singer of this band passed away, so I think this will be this band's only output.

INFERNÖH – "7 Spars" 12" (Distort Reality)
INFERNÖH is in the top rank for me last few years. Just outstanding bombastic Swedish hardcore continuing the legacy of bands like HERÄTYS and SKITKIDS. I have spilled a lot of ink on this band already so I will move on.

PARASIT – "Valj Din Egen Bodel" LP (D-Takt & Råpunk)
I can't find anyone else who is into this band. Excellent Swedish hardcore with a bit of dark crust/black metal influence. If you like bands like SKITSYSTEM and MARTYRDÖD *or* if you like D-beat raw punk you will love this LP, which is a mix of both styles into a perfect blend.

KYLMA SOTA / RAJOITUS – split EP (Svart)
I don't have this yet, but unless these bands have totally dropped the ball this is going to be top ten material from both.

GAS RAG – "Human Right" EP (Beach Impediment)
My favorite US release of the year, primitive raw hardcore that sounds like a perfect mix between 7"-era POISON IDEA and European bands like U.B.R. or SHITLICKERS. A great fresh take on a sound and style that a lot of people keep saying is played out.

CÜLO – "Return of" LP (Deranged)
A lot of people have decided not to like this band, but judging just from the music they are totally ace. It's really hard to pull off a full LP of raw fast '82 style hardcore, but these guys blaze right through over 20 tracks effortlessly.

KRÖMOSOM – "Nuclear Reich" LP (Distort Reality)
My favorite from all of the bands playing noise, not music. KRÖMOSOM has deep roots in D-beat hardcore and deliver powerful blasts of raw energy as opposed to just a wall of noise. Great live band as well.

V/A – "Hardcore 13" 2xLP (Kämäset Levyt)
This double LP continues the tradition started with *Hardcore 83* compilation and followed up by *Hardcore 93* and *Hardcore 03* comps. Several songs each mixing some very long running and reformed bands like TERVEET KÄDET, VIVISEKTION, SEKKAANUS, RAYGUN, ABORTI 13,

with stalwarts like FORCA MACABRA and VIIMEINEN KOLONNA and a host of current bands like MAAILMANLOPPU, VALIUM KIHARAT, YHTEISKUNNAN YSTVAVAT?, ANHEUS, LAPINPOLTHAJAT, PRANTOLA, MIELIALAIHAIRIO, KILJUVELKA-70, PROJEKTI 15, PORCO DIO, KAIVOSURMA, KONKURSSI, YDINPERHE and WHITE YEARS. Strangely, no KYLMÄ SOTA, YDINASEETON POHJOLA and ARMLESS CHILDREN. The booklet is not too informative for non-English speakers, but it's a great overview of the Finnish hardcore scene of today.

KORSFAST – "Huvuden Borde Ruilla" LP (D-Takt & Råpunk)
Another band I am shocked no one is talking about. Featuring Ake from MOB 47 on guitar. I know these guys keep starting new bands trying to do something different, but this sounds a lot like MOB 47 and DESPERAT—fast, raw hardcore with that trademark guitar sound/riffage. Ake! Ake!

KREMLIN – "Drunk in the Gulag" 12" (Beach Impediment)
As I noted in my column, I slept on this bands 7", but after hearing them I was won over. Has some very contemporary touches like reverby vocals, but sounds a lot like Dutch or Italian hardcore from the mid '80s

PACO MUS

Another year, another list. It feels like 2013 came and went in a minute. It was definitely a great year for underground music in general and personally I spent far too much time thinking about punk and releasing punk records. I spent just as much time listening to non-punk records, though. The MRR *bosses requested to make a punk-only list so that's what you have here… I may have taken a couple of licenses but ultimately I think everything on this list is acceptable. Locally I saw a resurgence of great bands and I can say loud that right now London has the best scene I remember since I moved here seventeen years ago. Globally, I witnessed many great records being produced worldwide, some great bands forming up and new band pushing the boundaries. I can only hope that 2014 brings us as many great records as 2013 did. Judging for the insane amount of killer demo cassettes I got in 2013 one can only assume that will be the case.*

Anyway, back to the list. This is the ten LPs, 7"s and tapes I enjoyed the most of the ones produced in 2013. I am not listening any record I released, otherwise the list would be quite different. No order. Disorder.

Peace.

LPs

CREMALLERAS – LP (Cintas Pepe)
Mexican two-piece playing primitive lo-fi punk with short bursts of hardcore. Terribly catchy and damaged break-up songs interluded with negative and hopeless observations on their daily bleak existence. Some of the songs make me think of CHUTE DE ESPERMA and some others of TERCER MUNDO, who they share members with. Silk-screened, handmade sleeves which give meaning to the "Mexican Condition" term. Good luck finding a Mint one.

·Y· – "Horizontes de Sucesos" LP (self-released / Burka for Everybody)
Cold wave from Barcelona that was glued to my turntable for months. Driving, dark, moody and atmospheric at times, ·Y· belongs to the new wave of people coming from hardcore punk who got tired of limiting their creativity to a dead formula. Perhaps not *MRR* approved because the absence of guitars and the abundance of synths, but punk for me is more than sounds so ·Y· stays in the list.

THE FLOOR ABOVE – "Bishop" LP (Savage Quality)
I think the word crude was invented to define the crucially fucked up guitar tone of this record. Nasty, inept loner hardcore from this one-man band from Nashville. Totally unexpected release that got me hooked from the first listen. Primitive and radical release for people who love bad, bad music. In my mind *Bishop* is the equivalent of '60s private-issued psych records from the middle of nowhere. Can't praise enough this piece of crap.

IRREPARABLES – LP (Nominal)
I may be cheating given that this was first released on a cassette in 2012 but pressing this demo on vinyl secured access to Punk Heaven for Nominal Records and I had to celebrate it somehow. IRREPARABLES were a short-lived band based in Brighton that never played live. Naïve punk that has been compared to hundreds of bands, from TELEVISION PERSONALITIES to DEAD MOON and that has a gigantic charm.

LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golpe" 12" (Discos Sense Nom)
Barcelona keeps producing amazing punk bands. LAS OTRAS is one of the many examples. They play no-frills feminist hardcore with no time to waste, their MLP is over in barely ten minutes. Their anarchist message is loud and clear and their sound follows the tradition of old Spanish/Italian/Brazilian raw hardcore. Certainly one of the greatest idealistic punk bands active today.

NO – "Great Space" 12" (Static Shock)
Four London-based freaks playing hard musik that is intense and menacing but not ignorant. Proving that there is room in hardcore to break from clichés while keeping the sound rooted in power. The recording on this 12" is powerful and the songwriting makes the recording flow perfectly. Yet more proof that UK punk scene is producing amazing punk again.

SELFISH – "Life Has No Vacant Time" LP (Feral Ward)
It only took SELFISH eight years to write the best traditional Japanese hardcore record in recent memory. Too busy burning at both ends, surely. Anyhow, the recording, production, songwriting and graphic design are flawless so I can't imagine how long I will have to wait for a yet better SELFISH record, which I am sure will happen one day.

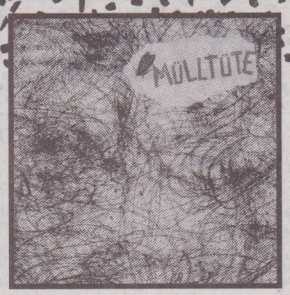
NOMAD – LP (Toxic State)
NOMAD's debut 12" is an immense step up from their previous 7"s. Distorted hardcore influenced mainly by old Japanese bands with the added current-day NYC attitude. I guess people call them crasher crust but that's such a stupid genre for which I think NOMAD are far, far above.

RAKTA – 12" (Dama Da Noite / Nada Nada)
Brazil's RAKTA is a late addition to my collection. I just got this record a few days ago but it has grown on me hugely. Repetitive, atmospheric goth music that is primal and intense. They have a strong feminist stance that is carried along the entire record including the carefully put together artwork.

VERONICA FALLS – "Waiting for Something to Happen" LP (Bella Union)
I have a soft spot for VERONICA FALLS. I've been buying everything they do and keep thinking that the next record won't be good. I keep being wrong. *Waiting for Something to Happen*, their second album, is just a perfect pop record with haunting melodies and songs the size of Hackney Town Hall.

7"s:

MAQUINA MUERTA – "Maquina de Muerte" EP (Metadona)



This is what happens when you mix a bunch of Mexican anarcho punks with my favourite philosopher, Bernat Mundial. Six tracks of no-fi/no-production, out-of-control radikal hardcore with incendiary attitude. Anti-authoritarian punk which is rooted somewhere between FIRMEZA-10, WRETCHED and ATAQUE FRONTAL. Seriously, I am a mellow person but every time I play this record I want to burn the entire world.

QUANGO – "Fatality" EP (First World Problems)
The best CRISIS record that CRISIS never recorded. Three tracks off of a four-track demo that are totally time capsule sounding. Living in a shithole could be the soundtrack of my first few years in this terrible city I live in.

DIE – "Life Is Hate" EP (Sonic Terror)
Probably the best HARDCORE (yes, capital letters) EP to come out of England in eons. It has been said before but they are part Boston, part Bristol. The best of both genres melted into one. Boot-stomping hardcore played on repeat at Mus HQ.

NEMESIS – "GYOU-SHOU" EP (Carnage / Ratbone / Solar Funeral)
In a day when the traditional Japanese hardcore bands are producing so-so records, NEMESIS stands heads above them all. A young Fukuoka band that carries the torch of the classic Selfish Records output. I am a sucker for such sound and enjoyed this record very much.

DIÄT – "Everyday/Hinge and Bracket" (Iron Lung)
Death-cold post-punk based in Berlin with 3/4 being Aussie. Everyday is such an immense jam that I can't just play it only once. Beautifully put together record. Perfect bad weather music played by Rude Dudes.

PERTTI KURIKAN NIMIPÄIVÄT – "Asuntolaelämää" EP (Airiston Punk-Levyt)
Released locally in Finland in the last seconds of 2013 just in time for its inclusion on this list. I had the pleasure to catch PKN live twice this year and it was a life-affirming experience. Proper outsiders playing catchy and aggressive punk in the best Suomi tradition making you think how far the punk scene has gone from the days when punks weren't the cool people at school.

ABSURDO – "Barcelona 92/Vacio" flexi (Discos Absurds)
Everything ABSURDO does is so carefully put together that you can't help but love it at first sight. This two-track flexi accompanies the always almighty *Mierda* zine which I love. The songs are amongst the best ones they have recorded and even though the flexi sound is on the garbage side of things, the tunes are there. The fact that I love the four guys in this band doesn't help. I am definitely biased towards them.

SUDOR – "Cuatro Canciones Compuestas y Olvidadas por El Grupo Sudor" EP (Todo Destruido)
This is a perfect punk EP. Four high-energy anthems full of urgency, vile and sarcasm, ineptly played and recorded live without much attention to fidelity. "Hardcore es Punk Radikal" is a declaration of intent for the MOB-47 of Toledo.

TAULARD – "Frankreich Katastrophe" EP (self-released)
Weirdly enough, 2013 was a year I played a lot of French punk. Maybe meeting this maniac known as Malek pushed me to cross off lots of my French wants and exposed me to a lot of stuff I didn't know of. Although sounding nothing like MOPO MOGO, FUZZ, KARNAGE or R.A.S., TAULARD it made a big impression on me. Their synth punk is clearly French. Their sound is soft and their songs are synth-driven with a charming accent and terrific hooks.

FRACASO – "Destruir" EP (En Estero)
Venezuelan inept anarchist hardcore. High energy, great attitude, catchy songs and a credible message. What else do you need for a perfect record?

DEMO TAPES
FRAU, ORIGEN, DEMONOS SALVAJES, MURDERER, MUERTE, MIGUEL / VOLCAN, LA MISMA, ARREST, CIEMO, ARMS RACE, CARBONATORS.

KAT SMITH

CØNDITIØN – "Bombed Out" EP (Rust and Machine)
Best band, best dudes, best record. Hopefully you Americans (and Canadians) caught CØNDITIØN on their recent US/Canadian tour, and if you did, you were probably blown away. If not by the sheer mass of sound and general loudness the band produces, then surely by the mightiness of their singer, Matt Trejo. Either way, when it comes to people, shows, tours, and music, CØNDITIØN is my number one of 2013. Something about this band I have always appreciated is the modesty in which they carry themselves and the realness they embody. Thank you for being a band.

SAVAGEHEADS – demo tape (self-released)
Boston (and Lowell) seriously produce the meanest hardcore in existence, and these bad boys are in yet another killer band! Songs self-described as "UK82 bedroom stompers" is a pretty accurate portrait of what this tape is all about. This is my favorite demo of 2013.

BLAZING EYE – demo tape (Overdose)
Hopefully you already know about this band if you are into, I don't know, KURO or UNITED MUTUATION, because this band is pretty darn close to a modern day equivalent. They are also a staple house-band for Los Angeles' East 7th Street venue. And I'd like to take this opportunity to name East 7th the number one venue of 2013! Seriously, keep up the good work folks! And keep producing righteous tunage for all.

MERCY KILLINGS – "F.B.A.T.P." EP (Beach Impediment)
This is a perfect 7", and I couldn't be happier it's finally out! I enjoy the cover art of this test press much better than the actual 7", so that's why it's on here. These are six tracks of blazing hardcore, with strong song writing and powerful vocals. The riffs are solid with subtle detail, which make them so perfect to accompany Mark's Jerry A-style vocals and Mike's hard-hitting drumming. Very glad to see a strong hardcore presence again in Richmond.

STERILIZED – demo tape (Building)
Furious, full-chord, ear drum-swelling D-beat from Olympia, WA that exceed expectations with delivery, especially live, but this demo fully slays on it's own. When this type of style is approached by people who literally only think about playing music all day, it's warms the punk soul in a way that's indescribable. This band is fucking perfect. Look out for their 7" on Video Disease in 2014.

NO TIME – demo tape (self-released)
A perfect Oi! band from Pittsburgh, PA. What more could you ask for? Hard drumming, solid leads and perfect, sing-a-long lyrics. Caught this band live twice back East and it was better than the demo, but I'm glad I have the tape to listen to whenever I want. Keep an eye out for these dudes. They are doing great things.

NEEDLES – "Desasperacion" EP (Iron Lung)
Relentless and perfectly executed, this 7" came out right at the turn of the New Year and it had remained in constant rotation all year. Along with the release of this EP, NEEDLES' presence has been felt all over the world in 2013! They have been playing a bunch all over, and it's about time, they've been a band for years! One of the top tier records of 2013.

GAG – all releases (too many to list)
GAG is another band that completely dominated 2013, by releasing multiple great records and tapes, along with several tours, including a full US tour at the end of the year. In the span of the year, I got to watch them get better than better each time they came through the Bay, or I went through the Pacific Northwest. They are one of the few hardcore bands that really "perform" while on stage, because they are all serious (but not too serious) musicians. Make sure to check out all the other bands these dudes are in.

GAS RAG – all releases (too many to list)
This quick and concise band lunges through hesitation, and brings the listener into the fucked up world GAS RAG exist in. I don't really know what I'm going to say that Justin Brigg's review of *Huffer's Rights* EP didn't already sum up, or what multiple other people are going to say in their top tens, but seeing this band in late 2013 summed up everything for me; they fucking rule.

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Nigh Hell" demo (Boston Cassette)
These highly anticipated tracks were worth the wait, even if they aren't on vinyl. The tracks on this cassette have an additional, clean guitar atop the usual brutal stompers, and slightly more UK82 influence than previous material. And let's face it, powerchords played with three fingers just have that full, warm sound that two fingers usually miss. Get your mitts on this if you can, there are still some floating in distros.

OBLIVIONATION – demo (Bleeding Edges)
A newer band featuring members of OUT COLD and Con from BLOODKROW BUTCHER/MALE NURSES that produce and execute a piece of raging hardcore. This tape starts out with a super moshable, strong riff and immediately draws you in. Although they have had a slower start in 2013, keep a look out in 2014 for their 7".

V/A – "Land of Nod" LP (Scavenger of Death)
The bands on this comp are WYMYNS PRYSYN, BUKKAKE BOYS, MANIC, RALPH, PREDATOR, GHB, COPS, GG KING, SHAVED CHRIST, GOD'S BALLS, ACID FREAKS, VINCAS, PREDATOR, and GENTLEMAN JESSE. Sometimes in the realm of compilations, there are just certain, distinct mixes of bands, songs, and overall sequencing that just grasps the pinnacle of why comps are made; to give the listener a "sampler" of or for a particular concept, place, genre, etc. In this case we have the punk and hardcore scene in Atlanta, GA. And I think it's safe to say, holy shit this scene is clearly off the fucking hook and thank you so much for giving everyone this comp.

INSTITUTION – "Domen Är Satt" 12" (De:Nihil / Havoc)
This record was never submitted for review, but it's way too good not to mention. Regardless of the pedigree of this band, they deliver this full-chorded, warm riffage over savage drumming, with throaty, harsh vocals. An essential for any fan of hardcore punk.

SICKOIDS – "No Home" 12" (Grave Mistake / Sorry State)
Like their previous material, SICKOIDS hammer through song after song with melodic, yet hard guitars, anguished vocals and hard as fuck drumming. Something about drummers who used to play grind and powerviolence, they make the best punk drummers. Especially accompanying tough ass riffs and vocals. I need to also mention Rob and Vince's incredible lyrics, because they truly are dark, and powerful. Despite their lack of US gig playing in 2013, they blew Europe away last summer and released a killer MLP.

PERMANENT RUIN – "Mas Alla de la Muerte" EP (Warthog Speak)
Speaking of grind and powerviolence drummers making the best punk drummers, PERMANENT RUIN makes the cut because they are just so fucking good. This band never, ever disappoints. Live, on record, as people, as part of a movement, they top all other Bay Area bands, but they don't care. They are humble, and just wanna choke you and make you bleed with the brutal hardcore they make. Top ten for life.

ACID WASH – demo (self-released)
So you like PENTAGRAM? Do you also like BIMARKS? Okay, so you should hear this if you haven't already, they have a bandcamp, so get to listening. Calvin, who is normally behind the drum kit in all his previous bands, is on vocals and beams these soul-y, heady melodies that couldn't be more perfect for the drone-y, heavy rock this band produces. This demo is super refreshing and highly recommended.

HONORABLE MENTIONS (I WAS TOO LAZY TO WRITE A SUMMARY):
GLAM – "Veneno En Sus Flechas" 12" (La Vida En Un Mus), INFERNOH – "7 Spar EP" 12" (Distort Reality), THE NEW FLESH – "Reality" LP (self-released), MERCENARY – demo, CONTINGENT – demo, THE FLEX – "Scum on the Run" EP (Milk Run / Video Disease), PROXY – "Something We've All Seen Before" LP (Imminent Destruction / Inflammable Material), S.H.I.T. – promo tape

CHRIS CORRY

BEST RECORD RELEASED AS A TAPE WITH THE BEST TRACKS OMITTED
BKB – "Nigh Hell" tape (self-released)
I woke up one night and caught a direct feed into my brain (via the matrix) of a BKB (formerly BLOODKROW BUTCHER) 12" EP that "isn't coming out." I Listened. Then listened five or six more times. Couldn't understand why it wouldn't be released. Weirdly familiar, yet singular mix of the UK82 A-list and the cream of the Swedish D-beat crop. Gorgeous recording, lovely playing, maniacal vocals. It was all there. A few weeks later a tape appeared with some, but not all of the songs from the session. Had it not been pared down to a cassette it would surely be punk record of the year. The tape might be good, but the material left off is arguably the best. Of course I'm only a spectator. Bands should do what they want and the tape is still a certified ass kicker.

BEST RECORD BY AN ESTABLISHED POWERHOUSE
FRAMTID – "Defeat of Civilization" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
With the level of saturation of this style of HC right now (which has basically become a scene in a separate orbit from regular HC/punk), a band has to rip pretty hard to stand out—especially when they have a couple of classics already under their belt. Ain't a big shock FRAMTID is still the one that does. Surely will be the most commonly found HC/punk record on Year End lists but entirely deservedly. I've spun *Under the Ashes* about six billion times since it came out, but *Defeat of Civilization* easily holds its own against that legacy. The gold standard, though as Levar Burton once said: "you don't have to take my word for it".

BEST 12" WITH NO DEVIATION OF AN ESTABLISHED FORMULA
HOAX – LP (self-released)
Was not sure these guys could carry on with their sound on a full LP. IMO they nailed it front to back. An address to the HC class of 2013—self hate through group love. The band that brought the mosh pit back to basements and lofts. The people's band. America's band. We will miss 'em.

BEST OUTTAKES RECORD
INFEST – "Days Turn Black" EP (Draw Blank)
TBH you can see why the second song was never released (insane and weird) and maybe the third one too (goofy opening riff), but the opener is a reminder that even unfinished ideas by Domino and Denunzio are powerful enough to be lethal. Worth it for that alone.

BEST DEMO TAPE
ARMS RACE – "2013" demo tape (self-released)
This band smashed it live. Sounded cool, looked cool, owned the stage really well for a new band. Wasn't sure if the recording would have as much charisma but it's safe to say it does. Total Brit-core. Loving the enthusiasm they've got over there. One to watch. I hope they do some records soon.

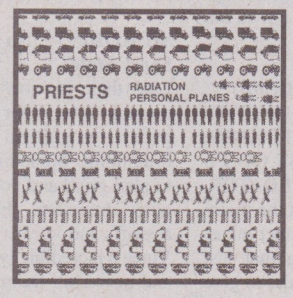
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN POWER VIOLENCE OR GRIND
IRON LUNG – "White Glove Test" 2xLP (Iron Lung / Prank)
IRON LUNG continues to kill even now that we've ebbed into another era of PV being "uncool". The stuff of car commercials and open-air concerts. For what it's worth that stuff does fucking suck, but IRON LUNG is unaffected by these kinds of bullshit and continue to dominate. A more saturated sound than their last LP, partially due to the noise additions, but also the guitar is more in your face and crushing. As always: with class and feeling.

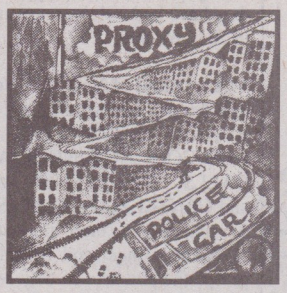
BEST STRAIGHT EDGE REC
HOUNDS OF HATE – LP (Painkiller)
Here's a band that tapped right into that late '80s NYHC sound with more taste and restraint that you'll frequently find in this corner of the HC galaxy. Rock solid riffing, period appropriate production, vocals that are authoritative, and lyrics that have anger but also some kind of social awareness. It's not important to have musical ability to play this kind of music but when a band does, it can be awesome—as is the case here. The surface elements of the big NYHC albums of the late '80s are there, but there's also the darkness that is associated with more left of center acts of that time that gives this a weight most others are missing.

OTHER BEST STRAIGHT EDGE REC
VIOLENT REACTION – "City Streets" 12" (Painkiller)
It was cool releasing bands straight bands at the same time that were pretty distinct from each other. Street punk tinged '82-core isn't exactly hard to come by these days but I've heard the other bands and for me VIOLENT REACTION is the one. The right amount of rough edges, hooks and brevity fall into place nicely on this one. Probably the best British record for this style since the fist VOORHEES LP.

Q: SWEDISH HC, A: SWEDISH HC
INSTITUTION – "Världens Ändstation" EP (D-Takt)
With members of TOTALITÄR (and then some) in tow, it hasn't taken long for this band to become the standard bearers of the Swedish HC/punk sound and who is anyone to argue really? It would be kind of a lie to say there were any surprises here but the level of refined craft and mastery of the style is as good as ever for both the veteran and younger members of the band. Timeless.

BIGGEST SURPRISE
SELFISH – "Life Has No Vacant Time" LP (Feral Ward)
Fuck it I'll say it—I'd written off this group. A lot of their back catalog was good at the time, but hadn't held up that well for me. I'd seen a couple ramshackle performances in the past as well. Did not expect much from a SELFISH LP that lingered unreleased for (judging by the liner notes) several years. Welp—it almost never happens folks, but I was wrong. This shreds. Heavily indebted to the Bloodsucker & Selfish (the label) back catalogs, which has always been the story on this band since they began their second act, but it just seems like they finally got everything dialed in. Solid gold guitar leads, great playing by all parties, a perfect recording, brutal vocals. Nearly every song with hummable riffs. Seasoned vets delivering their best work ever.





ROBERT MATUSIAK / REFUSE RECORDS

Another good year for punk rock and hardcore! This is my top ten of the year. Policy was simple: No releases on my label, so no cheap self-promotion here. Also, only releases I got physical copies off, so no checking Bandcamp or downloads to make this one. Still, some decent 2013 releases I didn't get yet and they'll be coming to me in the next few months, so this top ten could be different soon—but in this moment, this is what it counts.

TOP TEN NEW RELEASES:
1. VIOLENT REACTION – "City Streets" LP (Quality Control)
Skinhead hardcore is still a thing and it's interesting to see sXe kids discovering old Oi! bands after being strict HC fans over the years. I would like to believe that VIOLENT REACTION's punk music education started with BLITZ or 4-SKINS before checking any US straight edge bands, but even if it's the opposite, it doesn't matter that much. Their British accent gives them extra points for this genre, so non-UK bands are losing here from the start. This 12" is a perfect combination of 1982 Boston hardcore and the rude troublemakers' vibe of UK 82. Loud, fast and straight to the point. The current UK scene rules in Europe with bands like VIOLENT REACTION, STAB, OBSTRUCT, the FLEX and old timers like VIOLENT ARREST and GERIATRIC UNIT.

2. THE RIVAL MOB – "Mob Justice" LP (Revelation)
Whenever bands get super hyped, I get a bit skeptical. Previous releases of this band were good, but this one makes me want to shake hands with everyone who was championing them before. Very aggressive, very tight straightedge hardcore with the clear message to the world: Don't come close to me, asshole. They should come back to Europe anytime, as I couldn't see their exclusive two shows in Belgium and the UK last year. Also congrats to their drummer Justin for being in some of the very best current edge bands like NO TOLERANCE, BOSTON STRANGLER and RIVAL MOB.

3. NIGHT BIRDS – "Born to Die in Suburbia" LP (Grave Mistake)
I think I liked more their previous output, but this one is a top-notch, too. Many current bands want to play melodic punk, KBD or the late-'70s/early-'80s thing, but miss the individuality and skills to write actual songs. This band has it all, and their songs are catchy enough to become modern punk classics. Great band!

4. SECTARIAN VIOLENCE – "Upward Hostility" LP (Carry the Weight)
There are some good buddies in this band. Total international straight edge unit with members of COKE BUST, VIOLENT REACTION and STAY HUNGRY. Since COKE BUST can't be on my top ten, this is the way to honor Nick Tape—but of course, more than that. SxV is raging fire with their no-bullshit fast hardcore with right-on lyrics. I think their debut 7" was a bit better, but the 12" is great, too.

5. REPLICA – "Strings" EP (Prank)
Bay Area hardcore and their two 7"s (one as a demo) are on both my top tens. I really liked some of the members' other bands, like INFECT or SCHOLASTIC DETH, but REPLICA is a current killer band. Their singer is incredible, she has such a powerful voice. I hope they can overcome bureaucratic difficulties and visit Europe one day.

6. MAAILMANLOPPU – "Musta Ovi/Enää Kiväärit Laulaa" (Kämäset Levyt)
Current Finnish HC scene is one of the strongest in Europe now but I feel like it's still a bit overlooked. If anyone is checking Northern Europe, they're looking mostly for Sweden. Lots of great bands there too, but since while Finland is the deal, almost like in their classic days of the early '80s. Bands like MAAILMANLOPPU, 1981, YDINPERHE, SOTATILA and few more are the perfect example. I saw MAAILMANLOPPU in Kouvola in 2012, right after listened their 12" and I already knew I'm a fan. This latest 7" rules, too.

7. RAD – "Loud and Fast" LP (Phono Select / Sacramento)
This one came as a surprise. I never heard this band before, but after first 30 seconds of the LP I knew I discovered a new great band! This is loud and very fast female-fronted hardcore with short songs mostly less than one minute. Sounds like a combination of early DRI, DEEP WOUND, NO THANX and SIN 34. I need to find their 7"s somewhere.

8. LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golpe" 12" (Discos Sense Nom)
Another very vibrant current scene—Spain. There were a bunch of great bands coming from there in the last years but LAS OTRAS is my favourite of 2013 with this 12". A bit faster and more direct than their 7" and better in my opinion. 1-2-1-2 fast tempos, powerful songs with some good influence from ULTIMO RESORTE or LES VULPESS. Lyrics are also standout—many bands want to sound like this or that band nowadays but forget about the message, and this band doesn't. Spain is getting on the conservative route now with anti-choice laws and stuff so I'm not surprised that these women have enough reasons to get upset.

9. WIEZE FABRYK – "Cel i Swiatlo" LP (Black Wednesday / Scream)
There were some decent releases in Polish punk scene last year but it seems this one is my favourite. WIEZE FABRYK's sound is very influenced by the strong post-punk / cold-wave scene in Poland of the '80str with bands like SIEKIERA, 1984, DHM or VARIETE. This type of music has also been very hyped in the DIY scene of the last few years, but these guys did not find about all these bands in the last season. They've been doing their thing for over ten years and you can hear this. No posing here. Dark and atmospheric, almost feel the same like growing in the grey reality of Poland of the '80s.

10. CITIZENS PATROL / REPROACH – split EP (Spastic Fantastic / Way Back When)
Two great European bands on the same 7" wax. They've kept doing this thing for years and both are definitely among my fave Euro bands. VIOLENT ARREST or AGENT ATTITUDE LPs could easily close my top ten as well.

TOP TEN REISSUES:
1. NATIONS ON FIRE – "Strike the Match" LP (Kidnap Music)
Absolute classic of European straightedge HC. Positive, political and powerful!

2. BIG BOYS – "Fun Fun Fun" LP (540)
Best looking reissue of the year, impressive! Also, great record and great band. Punk can be fun fun fun too without being cheesy and boring fun-punk at the same time.

3. CONFLICT – "The Ungovernable Force" LP (Haataapu)
My favourite anarchopunk record ever. I remember listening this LP when I was a kid, it made an incredible impression on me. Best way to join the protest against nuclear arms, police violence or government than any book or leaflet.

4. HEIMAT-LOS / KRÖMOZOM 4 – split LP (Euthanasie)
One of my favourite French HC release ever. HEIMAT-LOS was such a great band, KROMOZOM 4 were very fast and funny, even if I don't understand French. HEIMAT-LOS *Schlag* 7" reissue could be here as well.

5. BLITZ – "All Out Attack" EP (Ugly Pop)
Best Oi! band ever and best soundtrack to violence and smashing bottles. Don't talk to me when I'm blasting these four tracks on my stereo, I'm full on aggression.

6. ANTI-CIMEX – "Victims of a Bombraid" EP (Nada Nada Discos / Spicoli Discos)
As well as other great-looking ANTI-CIMEX 7" reissues. This one is my favourite. Title song makes me feel like sitting in a bomb shelter in Warsaw 1939. Damn, Messerschmitts are coming again.

7. PARTISANS – "Police Story/Killing Machine" (Ugly Pop)
Another UK82 classic.

8. LOS CRUDOS – "Cobardes" flexi (Nada Nada Discos / Barmy Army Discos)
Very cool flexi 7" with some old tracks of this influential band.

9. REPLICA – "Demo" EP (Emancypunx)
Great demo reissued with an additional AS MERCENARIAS cover.

10. NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS – "No Sun No Tan" LP (Gummopunx)
Great catchy female-fronted punk rock, perfectly executed. Another band whose show I missed in 2013.

HONORABLE MENTION:
NE! Records for reissues of '80s Yugoslavian punk bands.

BAKALIS / SCULLCRASHER RECORDS

2013 has been the most productive year for the Greek punk scene, great releases one after the other, making it harder to choose whom to include in the Year End Top Ten. Fuck, I hate putting together lists like this, but here it goes.

LETHE – LP (Centipede / Clean Head / Eye5 / Imminent Destruction / Music We Create / No Sanctuary / Scarecrow)
The best crust/hardcore record since TRAGEDY's *Vengeance*, I don't really care if you agree or not, this band captured the darkness and misery that hovers over Greece and put it on vinyl complete with amazing artwork and Greek lyrics that makes the hair on the back of my neck stand up every time I listen to it. This is more than just music, it's a fucking statement!

PANDEMIA – "Modern Plague" LP (Eye5 / Imminent Destruction / Punk.gr / Scarecrow / Scull Crasher / We Don't Fight It)
OK, I took part in releasing this one so one might think that putting in on the list is a biased decision but seriously this is the kind of record that only comes out once every 20 years and becomes an instant classic. Like LETHE, PANDEMIA express feelings of disgust, anger and hopelessness of today's dead-end generation, music-wise this is post-punk like CRISIS and the SYSTEM but the vocals have an old Greek hardcore touch (citing ADIEKSODO as a main influence is right on point) thus making *Modern Plague* the perfect soundtrack for riots in the center of shithole Athens.

DESPITE EVERYTHING – "The Dawn Chorus" LP (self-released)
I guess some readers of *MRR* might know DESPITE EVERYTHING as they have toured the US twice. I was waiting for this LP for a long time and it just came up right in time for the Year End Top Tens. This is melodic punk/hardcore from the HOT WATER MUSIC school of punk that, truth be told, will unfortunately be disregarded by non-Greek reviewers as just another HOT WATER MUSIC clone. To me it's one of the best records I've heard from this style simply because it speaks to my heart in all the right ways.

NIGHT BIRDS – "Born to Die In Suburbia" LP (Grave Mistake / Taken By Surprise)
No introductions needed, I'm sure this will also be featured in more Year End Top Tens. Living in the suburbs myself I can totally relate to NIGHT BIRDS, late night skateboarding in places you shouldn't, watching cult horror flicks with friends while smoking too much bad weed and day-dreaming about stupid stuff. Now I only hope they make it sometime to Greece for a sweaty basement show! Oh, did I mention that "New Cults" is the best punk song I've heard all year?

NUCLEAR SPRING – "Run Me Up the Flagpole" EP (Cut the Cord That... / Doomtown / Hardware / Hysteria)
Three-chord punk rock is back with a bang! I loved this EP from the first listen, raw rock-ish guitars, great male/female vocals all wrapped up under a veil of early UK anarchopunk with "no future" lyrics. Just right up my alley! Definitely a record that will get repeated spins on my turntable while I'm screaming my lungs out to the chorus of "Far Away".

BORN WRONG – "Holding Cell" EP (Schizophrenic)
BORN WRONG released two EP's in 2013, even both of them are equally amazing I decided to include the latest as in my humble opinion compliments the band in the best possible way and sounds more mature than their debut EP. Furious and refreshing hardcore from Canada that bares no resemblance to the majority of bands that pass as hardcore these days. In fact they incorporate elements from my favorites such as TALK IS POISON, ECONOCHRIST and POISON IDEA, what more do you need punk?!

JUNGBLUTH – "Part Ache" LP (Halo of Flies / Vendetta)
Among the hundreds of hipster-core records that seem to pop up every day I found JUNGBLUTH's *Parte Ache*, this record stands out because of the perfectly executed mix of post-hardcore, melodic punk and screamo. I recommend this great band to those of you that still listen to stuff like TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR. Some friends (bastards!) saw JUNGBLUTH live and said they were great so here's another plus!

RUINED FAMILIES – "Blank Language" LP (Adagio 830)
Another powerful Greek band! This is their second full length—imagine a lonely kid from a fucked up family that hears voices in his head and suddenly decides to scream and put all these voices into music... Blown out chaos in the best possible sense. What I like most of this band is that no matter how hard you try you'll never get to fit them in your little genre game—they're in a league of their own.

STOIC VIOLENCE – 12" (Katorga Works / Video Disease)
An all out hardcore attack to optimists, fight them all!

V/A – "Ground Zero NYC 2013" LP (Always Restrictions / Toxic State)
Now this is a first—a compilation in my Year End Top Ten! You wanna know more about the New York anarcho-noise-punk scene? Here's all you'll need. For the unaware, some of the bands featured are: CRAZY SPIRIT, HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS, DEFORMITY (so fucking good!), NOMAD, PERDITION, DAWN OF HUMANS. Awesome!

REISSUES:
ADIEKSODO – ".38" LP (B-Otherside / Scarecrow)
The only repress that I cared about this year, ADIEKSODO were the first raw punk/hardcore band that came out of Greece in 1986. An essential record both music and lyric-wise, it's hard to find a record that after 27 years is still inspiring punks and the topics covered in the lyrics are as well-timed as the date it was released.

LIVE BANDS:
VAZURA, CHORTOFAGGOTS, EUGLENA, GUTTER, SLAVEBREED, CUT OFF, DELETE, THE MASS, PANDEMIA / ΠΑΝΔΗΜΙΑ, ZVARNA, BLOOD JUSTICE

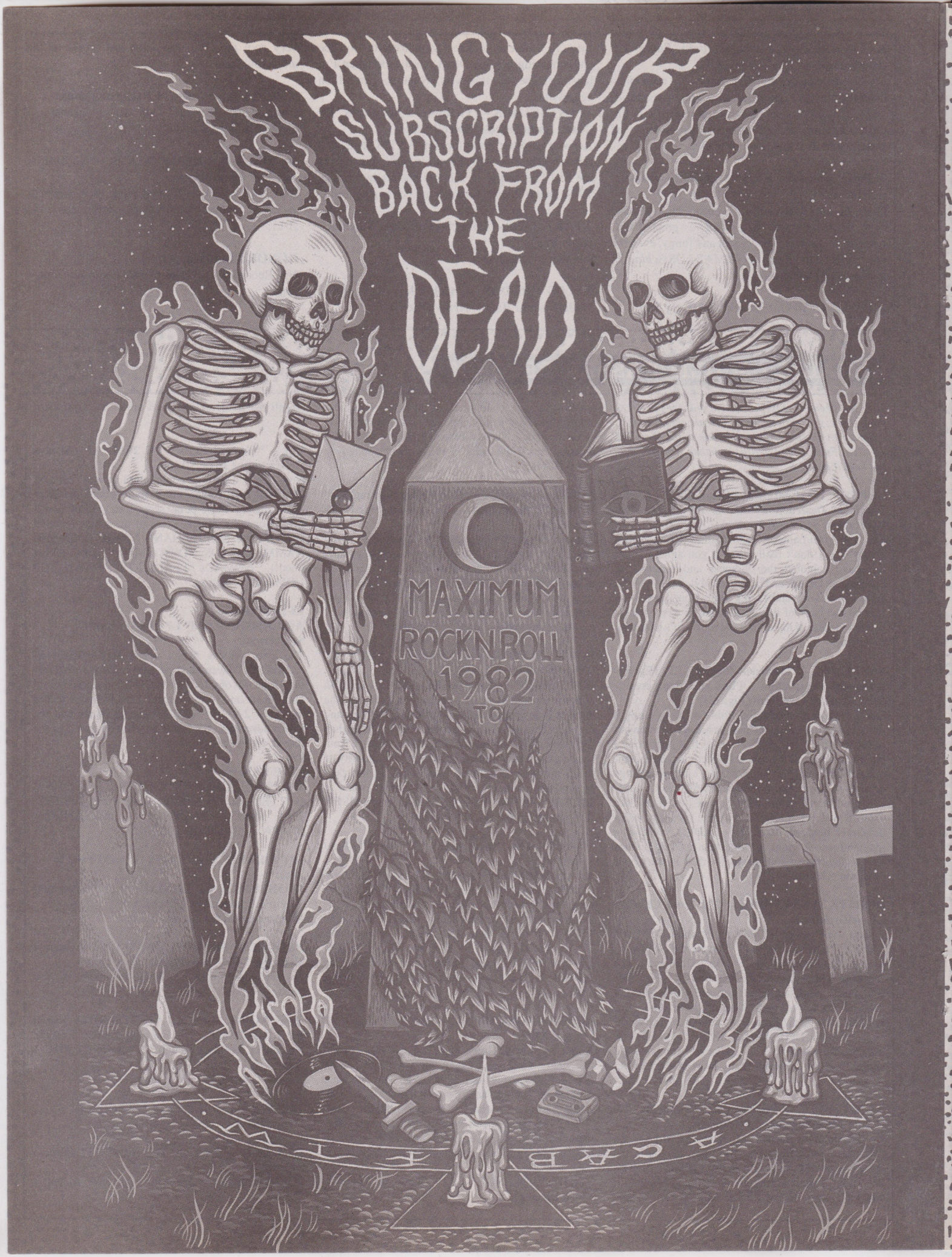
HONORABLE MENTIONS (It's all Greek to you):
CONSPIRACY OF DENIAL – LP (Scarecrow / World's Appreciated Kitsch)
Dark crust with female vocals.

PROGRESS OF INHUMANITY – "Economy Extortion" EP (Noise Effect)
Powerviolence/grindcore, give me more of that please!

RAW NOISE APES / SLAUGHTERDAY – split EP (Grindfather / No Fucking Labels / Septic Aroma of Reeking Stench / Stockroom / THC + DIY)
Raw crust/grind, beware of the wild apes!

LIFEWRECK – demo tape (self-released)
Powerviolence from hell.

CUT OFF – "Sick of This Life" 12" (Eye5 / Scarecrow)
The kind of powerviolence that is actually violent!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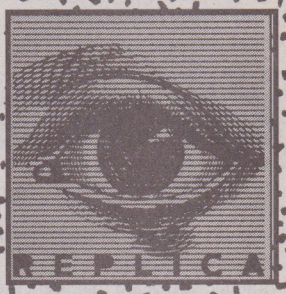

2013 was a joke because I was really looking forward to being Raptured in 2012. Well it didn't happen and I'm still fucking on this shit planet cursing my existence. Here is all the music I huffed to this year that I remembered enjoying after the comedown.

KRÖMOSOM – "Nuclear Reich" 12" (Distort Reality)

Get fucked or fuck off. Sinister walls of dissonance rise around desperate guttural yelps. Elements of punk rock'n'roll manage to slip thru the noise at times making this both acceptable for parties and alienating customers over the speakers at your place of employment. The only acceptable record to drown out the screams of the nuclear holocaust. It hasn't left my stack of unfilled records for a reason. It's a perfect banger.

LIFEFORM – "Digital Fucker" CD-R (self-released)

A clever joke? Or a bleak look into the future of punk? If you mix equal parts of Tumblr and butane in a bag and huff it you get this release. LIFEFORM songs done thru the Midi format, vocal tracks that just sound like Microsoft's Computer Sam, with the awkward delivery and everything. There are even some noteworthy covers that I dare not reveal. Don't find this hilarious yet? You haven't hit the poppers hard enough.

BELGRADO – "Siglo XX1" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Unnnfff what can I say about this record that I didn't already say two months ago? La Movida is alive and well and its resurfaced in Barcelona, just replace Franco with some Late Stage Capitalism. One of the few bands that have taken this new resurgence of gloomier sounds and have built a catchy and uniquely innovative sound. Dark overtones intertwine with poppy gritty edges, vocals travel thru space and ether. Its musical armor for long treks in urban wastelands.

THE BELLICOSE MINDS – "The Spine" LP (Blackwater)

I am usually a hater of the re-recording of songs. I prefer the grittness, urgency and pop hisses of demo cassettes. Sadly my copy of *Buzz or Howl Sessions* was swallowed by the Sandy River and all I am left with is a digital recording. The few demos songs that made it onto this LP are brilliantly re-recorded capturing their full sound and complexity, Smart and catchy post-punk. Tension and urgency are constantly battling with melodic upbeat tones. Reminiscent of VEX and THE MOB, don't ever stop please.

GAY KISS – "Fault" 12" (Anxiety Machine)

Kicking myself over and over again for deciding to move to the Bay during these fuckers Weat Coast tour and I ended up missing them all over the fuckin place. Pummeling, dirty, floor wriggling and demented hardcore from my next place of residence, Arizona. God this shit is just so fucking catchy and rude. Just enough noise disortion and breakdowns to keep me pissed and in the pit.

GAG – "This Punk Shit Is Cool But I Hope I'm Rob Zombie When I'm 28" 12" (Bedside)

No I didn't put this in my top ten just so I could write out the best title for a punk record in 2013. This shit is legitimately good. I will even let the one sided 12" shit pass. A bunch of demented fuckers playing sludgy gross hardcore for goons and writhers alike, Cheaper than an acid trip without the comedown.

THE LOVE INTEREST – demo tape (self-released)

My favorite demo of the year is this sleeper four-track cassette from the Pacific Northwest featuring members of GAG. Churning and melodic melancholy that is just almost too haunting and catchy. How they manage to make a breakdown goth is an unprecedented feat that deserves my unconditional praise. "How it Hurts to Outgrow" is the standout crooner that just makes you want to rip your heart out while the synth wail and the guitar echos.

ZYANOSE – "Why There Grieve?" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

A vicious attack on the sanctity of punk (don't fucking try to play like there ain't). ZYANOSE makes sure we have our yearly dose of static walls of ear grinding feedback and screeches. Most of you will hate this ,which just means moar noize for me.

ANASAZI / SURVIVAL – "Communion" split tape (self-released)

Probably the most delicate release of this year, the original tape came with a cover art of a pressed flower. ANASAZI explore a more industrial and trad goth sound on this release. Don't get me wrong, I love their aggressive deathrock sound, but this shit is really needed. In 2014 I expect most of these bands riding this post-punk wave to explore new sounds and not just mix *Only Theatre of Pain* with punk. Overall, it makes me miss them when they had a keyboardist. SURVIVAL is aggressive but lurking in the shadows; brooding angular guitars interweave with a drum machine and positive punk style female vocals. It is some serious dark wave. If this tape isn't on continuous rotation in your walkman, there is something truly wrong with you.

ECTOPLASM – "Drone" EP (Vinyl Rites)

This is a fucking ripper brought to you by peeps from MAUSER. Raw straightforward D-beat that is ran thru the appropriate amount of feedback. Everything sounds so fucking shitty and blown out and really that's why I love it. I just need it to be an LP really.

HONOURBALE MENTIONS AND REISSUES: ST. LORENA demo, RULE OF THIRDS *Mouthful* EP (No Patience / Video Disease), VIXENS 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus), DIVISION FOUR *1983 Demo Cassette* 12" (Smart Guy), NAPALM *It's A Warning: Singles and Live* LP (Static Age), SEX DWARF *Full Av Aska* EP (D-Tåkt & Räpunk / Konton Crasher), LONG KNIFE *Wilderness* 12" (Feral Ward), VARIX *I Can't Get Out* EP (Fashionable Idiots), VIOLENT PARTY *Poison Mixers* 12" (Konton Crasher).

JASON HALAL

If you're seeking surprises or under-the-radar gems, then look elsewhere cause this isn't the place. 2013 was a tremendous year for hardcore punk and I'm afraid this list doesn't do it much justice, but my attention span has its limits. It was also a good year for watching trainwrecks, and by that I mean the crashing and burning of such dubious micro trends as "goth punk," "chain worship," and the like, to which I say: good riddance! Here's to another stupid year.

CØNDITIØN – "Bombed Out" EP (Rust and Machine)

What makes this LA/Bay area crew stand out from the rest of the D-beat/raw hardcore pack? I honestly couldn't tell ya, but it just feels huge. One of the few West Coast bands I'm excited about in a big way.

GAG – all (too many to list)

To the haters who reduced this band to a HOAX rip off: congratulations, you missed the point entirely. Damaged noise-cum-art theatrics for the internet generation, or just a rowdy good time; take your pick.

GAS RAG – demo tape (self-released) + "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment)

D-beat and raunchy hardcore have been done to death many times over, but in the hands of these Chicago boys, they were the most fun and refreshing sound of the year. A modern Midwest classic.

GLUE – "Live at the Frank Erwin Center" tape (False Form)

There's a new breed of irreverent little punkers prowling middle America and if you ask me, these youngins are leading the pack. This tape is a perfect stepping stone for 2014, showcasing the hits from last year's demo, as well as a taste of what's to come. All hail the riff master.

IMPALERS – LP (540 / Todo Destruido)

Heavy punk and rock'n'roll Armageddon. MOTÖRHEAD in the 21st century. Nothing else this year even came close.

PROXY – "Police Car" EP (Discos MMM)

The LP was great, but this EP sealed the deal like a hole in the head. UK82, it turns out, is alive and raging in Montreal, and it feels good.

MERCENARY – demo tape (Scavenger of Death)

My favorite demo of the year came not from New York, not from Boston or any of the other strongholds, but Atlanta fuckin' Georgia. Scandi-core of the grittiest, most blown-out variety, with an LP on the horizon for 2014.

MERCY KILLINGS – "F.B.A.T.P." EP (Beach Impediment)

Ain't gonna front: the rock guitar leads on this thing

are abominable. But the rest of the package is so compelling, there's no way I could leave it off the list. American hardcore to a tee.

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLLABLE – "Observant Com el Mon es Destrueix" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
An ingenious little release from GLAM's ignorant cousins showing equal parts allegiance to *and* blatant disregard for the hardcore rulebook. Tense music for restless nights.

V/A – "Ground Zero NYC 2013" LP (Always Restrictions / Toxic State)
Aural documentation of the most exciting and inimitable scene in the post-everything landscape, and not one dud in the lot. Essential.

BONUS:
BROKEN PRAYER – 12" + JOINT D≠ – "Satan Is Real Again, Again, Or: Feeling Good About Feeling Good About Bad Thoughts" LP (Sorry State)
Two different bands pushing punk and hardcore in uncomfortable new directions (a Sorry State trademark to be sure). The results don't always work, but that's the nature of failing forward. Required listening for anyone with slightly more than a pea for a brain.

OTHER DELIGHTFUL RELEASES:
BLAZING EYE demo tape, DIE *Life is Hate* EP, FRAMTID *Defeat of Civilization* LP (Black Water / Crust War / LA Vida Es Un Mus), GREEN BERET *The Cult of State* EP (Side Two), HOAX – LP (self-released), KREMLIN *Drunk in the Gulag* 12" (Bad Vibrations / Beach Impediment), OBLITERATION *War Is Our Destiny* EP (Beach Impediment), PERDITION *Martial Law* EP (Hardcore Survives), SAVAGEHEADS demo tape, SICKOIDS *No Home* LP (Grave Mistake / Sorry State), SMÄRTSAM UTLÖSNING – demo tape, SOCIETY NURSE – 12" (Iron Lung), STAB *Blindness and Lies* EP (Quality Control HQ), STOIC VIOLENCE – 12" (Katorga / Video Disease), TONY MOLINA *Dissed and Dismissed* 12" (Melters), WYMYNS PRYSYN *Time* EP (No Breaks), and a buncha other shit that falls outside of *MRR*'s normal purview.

JUSTIN DAVISSON

VENKMAN – "Powerviolence and Applesauce" EP (Cow Catcher)
Well ya know Mean Gene…lemme tell all th' brothers & sisters sumthin'! These SF fastcore/power-violence sillies are making a great racket in the vein of SPAZZ and LIFE'S HALT. With "Burritos and Wrestling" they continue a long running punk and squared circle tradition.

NIGHT BIRDS – "Maimed for the Masses" EP (Fat Wreck Chords)
Fast, melodic and surfy/twangy punk with a great title track dedicated to wrestler Mick "Cactus Jack/ Dude Love/Mankind" Foley.

PERMANENT RUIN – "Más Allá de la Muerte" EP (Warthog Speak)
Punishing as fuck San Jose powerviolence/grind with really intense vocals.

ABUSE – LP (To Live a Lie)
Crushing grind / powerviolence from North Carolina. No Scions, no masters!

CALM THE FIRE / FULL OF HELL – split EP (A389)
Raging power-violence/death grind with really cool vocals. The flipside is a tripped out mix of noise rock and hardcore. Can't go wrong with either.

TERMINUS – "Graveyard of Dreams" CD (Boss Tuneage TPPL)
UK anarcho band from 1982-'96 who seamlessly merged the sounds of '80s death rock, the DAMNED, ZYGOTE, NWOBHM and made all of this into a collection of super-catchy punk songs.

PIG DNA – "Controluuufuuckerr" tape (self-released)
Unhinged G.I.S.M. / DISCLOSE influenced noisy hardcore from Oakland by way of Philly. Love their cryptic oddness of their titles and websites.

QUAALUDES – demo tape (self-released)
Rhythmic riot grrl/post-punk sounds from S.F. Excellent live band, too.

LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golpe" 12" (Discos Sense Nom)
Kick-ass & rippin' punk via España. Heard this at *MRR* house in between doing my reviews and just love it. It sucks I didn't get to see them live, though.

COSMIC PSYCHOS – "Go the Hack" LP (Goner) / NEW BOMBS TURKS – "!!Destroy-Oh-Boy!!" LP (Crypt)
Double dropkick of reissues that reiterate how damn great both bands are/were.

I DIDN'T SEE A WHOLE LOT THIS YEAR BUT THIS STUFF RULES, OK?
CYCLOPS / PISS TEST / COURTNEY AND THE CRUSHERS at Thrillhouse Records

PIG DNA / MORAL HEX / RAPID LOSS / VIVID SEKT at The Fortress
A solid noisy punk, fast hardcore and anarcho/post-punk bill and a super good D.I.Y. venue with their own bar and patio.

WARM SODA / HELLER KELLER / WHITE MYSTERY / BURNT ONES at 4/20 Psych Fest at Brick & Mortar
Power pop/garage and psych goodness all day and into the night.

MONTE / STILLSUIT / QUAALUDES / PERMANENT RUIN at House of the Dead Rat
Post-punk, mid-paced punk, angular sounds, grindcore and power-violence on the same bill and every band was great. DIY shows in San Jose rule! I need to see more shows here; it's a helluva a good time.

Meeting "Rowdy" Roddy Piper, Terry Funk and Bret "The Hitman" Hart at Wrestlefest 2013 at Newark High School. Legends of the squared circle will always be better than logo-infested MMA bros.

CHUCK BARRELS

THE 13 THINGS YOU SHOULD HAVE BOUGHT IN 2013:
1. LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Sex Pit" EP (Muckraker)
These young mutants rose to the top of the garbage-punk heap with their first actual vinyl release. Check out all of their Spotted Race comrades on tape as well. The slimiest.
2. DESTRUCTION UNIT – "Deep Trip" LP (Sacred Bones)
For those unaware, DU has been around for the past dozen years or so (and Ryan Rousseau was also a founding member of the REATARDS), but this revamped version of the band has reached staggering new heights. A foreboding and dark psychedelic rock masterpiece.
3. THE REPOS – "Live Munitions" LP (Youth Attack)
Perhaps the best record in the REPOS/ROPES catalog thus far. Impeccable guitar tone and one of the best frontmen of modern times hardcore rock'n'roll.
4. KREMLIN – "Drunk in the Gulag" 12" (Beach Impediment)
Non-stop reverbed-to-hell D-beat hardcore Motörpunk rippers from Toronto's mightiest outfit.
5. BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS "Holodeck Survivor/Not Getting Stabbed" (Total Punk)
Zero-fi Southern dumb-punk sci-fi trashcan garage destruction from the mind of a fucking genius.
6. GRABBIES – "Live/Live" (Fashionable Idiots)
One of the greatest achievements in the history of recorded music and the best live record of all time.
7. TRUE SONS OF THUNDER – "Stop and Smell Your Face" LP (Little Big Chief)
Degenerated and dangerous psychedelic rock'n'roll dirgery from some distinguished Southern gentlemen. Inhale the fumes.
8. COUNTER INTUITS – "Sheets of Hits" LP (Pyramid Scheme)
Ron. House. Find out who he is you whippersnappers. Brilliant American post-punk/DIY for the modern age.
9. V/A – "Land of Nod" LP (Scavenger of Death)
A compilation of all that is good about Atlanta's top shelf punk scene. GG KING, PREDATOR, WYMYNS PRYSYN, RALPH, MANIC and lots more that will appeal to all tastes.
10. MORDECAI – "College Rock" LP (Richie)
This is what can best be described as "American guitar rock," equally indebted to NEIL YOUNG, FLIPPER, the STOOGES and the VELVET UNDERGROUND with the outsider aesthetic you might expect from some kids who are from Montana.
11. URINALS – "Negative Capability" 2xLP (In the Red)
You should already know this and love this, but this is the definitive compilation of some of the greatest music ever recorded.
12. KREMLIN – "Last Last" cassette (self-released)
The death rattle from a band who only did one thing wrong all year: they broke up. RIP.
13. BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS / GIORGIO MURDERER – split 7" (Holotrash)
The BUCK BILOXI side is great (how could a song called "Shithole Boys" not be?), but you really need to hear GIORGIO MURDERER and his lo-fi synth-punk attack. If you like the SPITS...

MATT BADENHOP

PANDIMIA – "Moderna Panoukla" 12" (Eye 5 / Imminent Destruction / Punk.gr / Scarecrow / Skullcrasher / We Don't Fight It)
I played this LP more than any new record this year, and it's easily my number one pick for 2013. Seeping with a special passion and anger, PANDIMIA has burrowed under my skin and will manifest as goosebumps upon each listen, forever.

PLEASURE LEFTISTS – "Elephant Man/Not Over" (Katorga Works)
"Elephant Man" might be the best song of 2013. The B-side is no slouch, either. Music to get lost in.

INSTITUTION – "Domen Är Satt" LP (De:Nihil / Havoc)
We all grieved when TOTALITÄR announced their final vinyl back in 2007. Sure, there have been many competent D-beat/Swedish hardcore bands since, but really no one can even come close. Then comes this fucking smasher featuring the same kind of mesmerizing riffs, perfect pulsating D-beat drumming, and of course TOTALITÄR's legendary frontman, Poffen. The result is unfuckwithable.

ABSURDO – "Barcelona 92/Vacio" flexi (Discos Absurds)
A flexi in my top ten? "Barcelona 92" wins as tie for best song of the year! One of the best and most inspiring current bands.

CRIATURAS – "Espiritu de Libertad" LP (Hardware / Residue)
Being from the crop of Austin punk that CRIATURAS comes from, I could not help but instantly connect with this one. They've mastered the craft of taking simple punk song ideas and warping them into unique and compelling scorchers with pounding drums, innovative guitar riffs and commanding vocals.

REPLICA – "Strings" EP (Prank)
A rare instance of a hardcore band that's inspiring more than moshing and reckless destruction. Lots of aggression, but moving and thought-provoking. Hooks-galore hardcore.

KNUSTE RUTER – "Bruddstykker" LP (Ruin Nation / Sjakk Matt / Skuld)
One of the world's only current punk bands effectively deploying the classic Norwegian hardcore sound just took it up a notch on this LP by adding the vocalist from Norwegian HC-punk legends STENGTE DØRER! Didn't take long to sell me on this.

INFERNÖH – "7 Spår" 12" (D-Takt & Råpunk / Distort Reality)
I just couldn't resist the hype. The previous recordings were OK, but I heard someone play *7 Spår* at the compound and finally decided to get the fuck over myself. I was hooked pretty quick.

LA FRACTION – "Les Silences/Terre Damnée" (Feral Ward)
Though these aren't their strongest songs, I simply can't resist anything LA FRACTION does. They're one of the best punk bands in the history of the world! I thought they'd broken up or something, so I was glad to see this record appear as proof that they're still alive! When Magali sings I melt, without fail.

SELFISH – "Life Has No Vacant Time" LP (Feral Ward)
You'd be hard-pressed to find a better example of a band properly paying homage to another band or overdone style. SELFISH does this and more, adding their signature charging speed and guitar leads, once again creating a pulverizing and epic hardcore opus. The guitar line on "Overcome" just kills me every time!

RUNNERS UP IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER:
VARIX – "I Can't Get Out!" EP (Fashionable Idiots)
THE STOPS – "Wait for Today" EP (Residue)
LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golde" 12" (Disco Sense Nom)
FUNERAL CONE – "Peel Back the Foil" EP (100% Breakfast / Trotz Allem)
FRAMTID – "Defeat of Civilization" LP (Crust War / La Vida Es Un Mus / Black Water)
BELLICOSE MINDS – "The Spine" LP (Black Water)
MAZHOTT – "Awiha" EP (Tian an Men 89)
MAAILMANLOPPU – "Musta Ovi/Enää Kiväärit Laulaa" (Kämäset Levyt) + "Valtaa" (Passing Bells)
APPARATUS – "Löst Demo" EP (Shogun)

GREAT DEMO TAPES:
PARANORMAL (France), DEFAITE (France), TELECOMMANDE (France), CHAIN RANK (USA), DATA CONTROL (Sweden), TRENCHES (USA), the BROOD (USA), BLAZING EYE (USA), OLD CITY (USA), AVICHINES (Mexico), EXTERMINACION (Colombia), FÖRFALL (USA).

REISSUES I'M THANKFUL FOR:
GOLA JAJA – "Naked Bollocks" LP (NE!), KAOS – "Betonska Djeca" LP (NE!), NERORGASMO + "Passione Nera: Discografia 1985-1993" 2xLP (F.O.A.D.), ADIEXODO – ".38" LP (B-Otherside / Scarecrow), EX-HUMANS – "Anofeli Epiviosi" LP (Geheimnis), STIGMATHE – "Fronte Di Nervi" LP (SOA), SATAN PANONSKI – "Hard Blood Shock" LP (S.S.), KLAXON – "1984" LP (Sydney Town), ANTI-CIMEX – EPs box set (Nada Nada), KICK – LP (Static Age), RUDIMENTARY PENI – "Pope Adrian the 37th Psychristiatric" LP (Outer Himalayan), BIG BOYS – "Where's My Towel/ Industry Standard" LP (Light in the Attic / Modern Classics), DEFEKTNO EFEKTNI – "A/D" (NE!), SADO NATION – "Disruptive Pattern" LP (Gummopunx)

LIVE BANDS (AND WHERE I SAW 'EM):
DAMAGES / BLAZING EYE (Los Angeles), COMPLICATIONS (Montreal), LA URSS (San Francsico and Oakland), POLISKITZO / LAS OTRAS (San Francisco), DRAPETOMANIA / SADICOS (Oakland), SGNLS (Philly), ABSURDO (every Bay Area appearance), NEON PISS / TALK IS POISON / CRUDOS (Berkeley), SUDOR (San Francisco), REPLICA / PERMANENT RUIN / NEEDLES (many times), SKELETAL FAMILY / ARCTIC FLOWERS (Los Angeles), PLEASURE LEFTISTS (San Francisco).

CHRISTINA P.

TOP 10 AUSTRALIAN PUNK-SOMETHINGS OF 2013

1. THE ZINGERS – LP (Million Dollar)
The long awaited LP by Melbourne's most notoriously negatively punk. The lyrics are so sour, they'll make you laugh. The vocals—you've never heard whinier. The guitar is a shrill drill in your brain. Their pretentious outfits, an eyesore. The punkest record is completely anti-punk. Hate everything with a sneer. A classic record and it's not even a year old.

2. SCAB EATER – "Abject Flesh" demo tape (self-released)
Hardcore punk done by raw/crust punks; this demo absolutely slays. The recording captures the energy they put forward in their live shows. 200 copies made. 7" to follow up this demo, coming out this year.

3. EXTINCT EXIST – "MMXIII" demo tape (Blood of War)
The perfect fusion of technical and clean thrash metal mixed with the energy and drive of crust punk, by members of NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR, PISSCHRIST and other renowned Melbourne bands from the early 2000s. Lyrical focus on the environment backed by facts and passion, not hate and hearsay. LP in the works, out this year.

4. Australian dark punk – Using an emerging punk genre to include a few bands; NERVOUS TREND, RULE OF THIRDS, OCCULTS, MASSES all broke through to the punk scene in 2013 with demos and 7"s, touring and supporting punk as the band on the line up to break the barrage of fast, raw noise and licks with gloomy and eerie mid-paced synth punk. LAKES is one of the initial bands in Australia to run with this style of music, going for a good few years now, but with a new LP *Blood of the Grove* out late 2013 on No Patience Records. NERVOUS TREND from Perth put out a demo through Jerk Store Records (Alex who runs the label is also in the band) in the last month of the year. RULE OF THIRDS from Adelaide released a demo and a 7" through No Patience. OCCULTS, a 7" through No Patience also. MASSES self released their demo in 2013 and have a 7" coming out in the early new year.

5. New wave of Australian weirdo hardcore punk – New band from Perth PRAG released a demo tape in the last few days of 2013. SIMFUCKERS released their *You Get What You Deserve* demo tape off Cosmicautistic Records, the singer's label (Better known as "Boy Toy" from VAGINORS). Primitive, simple, noisy, self-annihilating punk. Super fuzzy and hazy production quality. Hardcore punk done Australian, more bells and whistles but with the weird isolation of living in Adelaide. Hate

yourself. OILY BOYS had no releases this year but deserve props for their part in this music. Cool Death Records released a few tapes in 2013 and dominate this Toxic State music style worship with Melbourne bands like GUTTER GODS, VELVET WHIP, DRIBBLE and LEATHER LICKERS.

6. KRÖMOSOM – "Nuclear Reich" 12" (Distort Reality)
Long awaited full length from Melbourne raw punk supergroup, comprising of members from PISSCHRIST, NDT, Leprosy, BLOODY HAMMER and EVIL WAYS. Put on a stellar show every time whether they're playing to 5 people or 500.

7. AGENTS OF ABHORRENCE – "Relief" LP (625 Thrash / Psychocontrol)
Raw tones but doesn't have a layer of noise obstructing the good bits: great production. More straight forward than their previous album. Abrasive grind the whole family can enjoy.

8. MAN HUNT – "Human Detritus" EP (Life. Lair.Regrets / One Brick Today)
Grinding powerviolence with hardcore tendencies, fronted by female. Sounds like brutal murder with driving intentions pushed by insanity. From Brisbane.

9. OOGA BOOGAS – LP (Aarght!)
Utmost respect for these dudes and associated bands they play with. Their last LP release was in 2008, the last time I saw them live was 2009. Then they played one show in a series of "(Sunday) Morning Ritual" at the Copacabana on Smith St, launching their new LP and I remembered how great this band was. 1970s unpretentious punk rock with a bit of synth, a bit of rock'n'roll, a bit of suave, a lot of extended jams and a lot of up-beat attitude (with some good Australian down and out rock'n'lullaby thrown in).

10. CUNTZ – "Solid Mates" LP (Homeless)
Aussie blokes covering the monotonous life of a working class Australian. Tighter than their last LP but still keeping a sludgy element to the punk.

AL QUINT

Another year with plenty of good and near-great records, although I think 2011 and 2012 were a little better. When putting together a top ten list for any year I want albums that will stand the "test of time," so to speak. There have been some definite go-to albums in the last few years—CRAZY SPIRIT, HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS, FOREIGN OBJECTS, RANK/XEROX, the ENERGY and JOINT D≠ immediately come to mind as albums I've yet to tire of. That said, all of the 12"s, 7"s and demos on this list are worthy of your attention—at least in my humble opinion.

Boston definitely had an up and down year and I'm not just talking about music—there was the Marathon bombings on Patriots Day this past April where three people were killed and over 250 injured. That's why it was a feel-good moment for the city when the Red Sox unexpectedly won the World Series. I know many of my readers hate sports and can't understand why so many punks around here are huge sports fans (mostly for the Red Sox and Bruins), but I think it's ingrained into Boston's social fabric. And even if it's "only a game" and the players are paid obscene amounts, what's wrong with something that lifts people's spirits? Also, let's have a moment of silence for a pair of great local bands who called it quits this year—BLOODKROW BUTCHER and BRAIN KILLER. On to the lists—more or less in order of preference.

LP/12":
CRIATURAS – "Espirítu de Libertad" 12" (Residue)
Charging and aggressive hardcore but there's also a strong melodic element, as well. Dru Molina's vocals are a wonder to behold as she goes from full-on rail to something more soothing. Crack musicianship, especially from Victor Gutierrez, who is one of the best guitarists in punk. The title track is catchy as hell while simultaneously bowling you over. D-beat inspired hardcore doesn't have to be just noise.

OUT COLD – "A Heated Display" 12" (Painkiller)
A posthumous album of sorts—the basic guitar and drum tracks were recorded in 2005 by Mark Sheehan and John Evicci before OUT COLD quietly split in 2009. Sadly, Mark passed away in 2010 and the tracks remained unfinished until now. John brought in Mikey and Deuce from the last lineup of the band to contribute bass and extra guitar and the vocals were done by the band's original singer, Kevin Mertens. And Kevin *nails* it and the music is as lethal as ever—razor-sharp thrash and mid-tempo hardcore played with clockwork precision. A band who never compromised their sound to fit trends, who unjustifiably seemed to fly under the radar—and this is a more-than-fitting epitaph. There are fourteen more songs that will come out on a subsequent release.

JOINT D≠ – "Satan Is Real Again, Again" 12" (Sorry State)
The follow-up to my favorite album in 2012 and, while not on that level (and I don't think they'll ever top "(I'm) Haunted"), this is still better than a lot of what I heard this year. Frenetic hardcore with a dense, cloud-like atmosphere hanging in the air and some memorable riffs/arrangements, especially for "False Flag" and "ERV." Guitarist/vocalist Bobby Michaud's other band BRAIN F≠ will be back with a new album this year and that's definitely something I'm looking forward to hearing.

TV FREAKS – "Two" LP (Schizophrenic)
The only other band besides JOINT D≠ to find its way onto this list two years in a row. TV Freaks mettle continues to be jabbing, jittery punk with garage and post-punk elements. Definitely some EDDY CURRENT moves here and there but there's more aggression, even a whiff of early NIRVANA at times—and that shouldn't be viewed as a negative. Nervy and hard-hitting.

STOIC VIOLENCE – 12" (Video Disease)
Bile-filled, no-nonsense, old school hardcore punk from these chip-on-shoulder Californians. Nothing complex—just a tough and bruising sound to get the pit started. Hits the same way a band like WASTED TIME did a few years back. Eight songs, over in less than ten minutes and I don't really feel cheated.

MANIPULATION – 12" (Sorry State)
Pure burn, pure rage on this Chicago band's long-overdue 12" debut. A havoc-wreaking hardcore punk sound driven by a two-guitar attack, pile-driving bass and drums and Jordan's anguished vocals. Swedish hardcore meets mid-period POISON IDEA blaze and the end result is relentless and punishing from start to finish.

HOAX – LP (self-released)
This is an impressive package, with six fold out posters and an impressive hardcore album, period. Jesse's vocals have a psychotic nature and the dark, stomping mid-to-fast paced music is a fitting accompaniment. Churning and heavy, a near nervous breakdown on wax. Dark stuff.

CÜLO – "My Life Sucks and I Could Care Less" LP (Deranged)
These button-pushing Chicago miscreants finally deliver a full-length album after a bunch of 7"s. I *still* think they'd benefit from a bass player, but this is a fun smorgasbord of thrashy hardcore and more tuneful punk stylings (the title track in particular) that will hammer its way into your heart. Bonus points for not only pilfering from DEVO's "Mechanical Man" but leading off the album with it. Haven't heard anything that brazen since JOHN BROWNS ARMY started their album with the intro to the WHO's "Baba O'Riley."

RUNNING – "Vaguely Ethnic" 12" (Castle Face)
A last-minute entry. I only checked out this album a few weeks before putting this list together, after seeing it on Gerard Cosloy's year-end round up. For those of you who don't know who the hell Gerard is, he used to do *Conflict* zine back in the day, put out the legendary *Bands That Could Be God* comp and was running Homestead Records and working with bands like NAKED RAYGUN, BIG BLACK and SONIC YOUTH when he was in his early twenties. I consider RUNNING punk in the same way I considered those bands punk. I already had their 2012 *Asshole Savant* 12" in the digital format but this somehow escaped my notice. Edgy rock with a buzzing spacy-ness in the guitar playing (there's some inspiration from Helios Creed from CHROME, methinks) and underpinned by an anvil-sturdy bass/drums tandem and echo-laden vocals that are buried into the mix a bit. Music to mess with your head.

BROKEN PRAYER – 12" (SORRY STATE)
A relentless sound with a chaotic nature similar to DOUBLE NEGATIVE, at times, but a few different wrinkles, as well. For one thing, in addition to the standard guitar/bass/drums setup, they have synth as part of the sound, which is mainly used as an atmospheric element and it's often buried in the mix. Along with the fast-paced rippers, they add darker, doomier, cold wave touches on "What Did You Expect," "Settle for Less" and a few others. A few semi-clunkers but, overall, this will leave your head spinning.

EPs:
Nothing mellow about any of these 7" selections (or anything else on these lists for that matter) but they don't all sound the same. There's the boiling-over hardcore of MERCY KILLINGS, DIE, CREEM and GAS RAG to the goofy noise-mongering of VAGINORS to the Riot Grrrl inspired BAD DADDIES to the more rockin' punk of NEO CONS and NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS. More or less in order...

VAGINORS *Total Nonsense* EP (No Patience / Video Disease), CREEM *Curator* (Static Shock),

MERCY KILLINGS *F.B.A.T.P.* EP (Beach Impediment), GAS RAG *6 Track* EP (Even Worse) + *Human Rights* EP (Beach Impediment), NEO CONS *Idiot Circus* EP (Deranged), NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS *Birth Right* (Deranged), DIE *Life is Hate* EP (Sonic Terror), BAD DADDIES *Bad Year* EP (Central District), GAG *40 Oz. Rule* EP (Warthog Speak), SAD BOYS *Frolic!* EP (Toxic State)

DEMOS: The DEFORMITY demo was one of my most-played releases of the year. Head-rattling garage / hardcore / punk with an ear-grabbing rawness. That pretty much applies to just about all of the demos here. The ear-grabbing rawness, that is... DEFORMITY, MISSIONARY, SAVAGEHEADS, NUKE CULT, TERMINAL CRISIS

LIVE (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER): INFEST, VAGINORS, BLOODKROW BUTCHER, BRAIN KILLER, GREEN BERET, MISSIONARY, WARTHOG, GAS RAG, GLUE, GAG, IMPALERS, SOCIETY NURSE, NEO CONS, CRAZY SPIRIT, S.H.I.T., GASMASK TERROR, KRÖMOSOM, RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA, SAVAGEHEADS, COMBAT ZONE.

AMELIA AN.OK & GHOST

The person I trust most with my Punk life and straightforward Punk sensibility is Ghost of Total Fucker Records. We collaborated on my 2011 top 10 and are once again going to bring you the past year through a filter all our own. Here is our top Punk of 2013 brought to you via Oakland and Boston:

Vinyl:

EEL – "Fall Out Noise" 45 (No Label)
The ultimate Punk swindle of 2013 selling used 45s that had been rubbed with sandpaper as records on their 2013 West Coast tour. Let's keep Punk inaudible! More swindles in 2014, please! (Amelia)

S.H.I. – "Struggling Harsh Immortals" EP (Crust War)
Cherry from the infamous ZOUO and other ex-DANSE MACABRE following a natural progression from Dark Punk through Goth to produce a fusion of the styles with a driving Industrial beat and whirling soundscapes. Fans of the members' previous works will not be disappointed. (Ghost)

UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Observant Com el Món es Destrueix" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This band is a Catalan-language hardcore band that featuring members of Spanish bands such as GLAM, ATENTADO and DESTINO FINAL. It's an intense listen as the intro takes you from chopping forests to the psychedelic deliriousness heard with bands such as HAWKWIND but they don't leave you in a transcended state for long. Soon, the listener gets pulled from the etheral and brought into a noisy realm of savage, feedback laden, hypnotic hardcore punk. This LP is truly spellbinding with its reverbed, angry Catalan attacks mixed with noise and primitive punk. This record breaks ground—this is not more safe, recycled garbage but a true individual release to make 2013 a year that punk proved it was still alive and with us.

PROXY – "Police Car" EP (Discos MMM)
Catchy and classic as they seem to be holding a séance with early BLITZ combined with all your rock'n'roll favorites creating a modern party classic. This album captures the truth that having a good time is what life's all about. Like the CRIMINAL DAMAGE of this decade, PROXY is seared into our consciousness and not fading away anytime soon. ACAB! (Amelia)

ARCHAIC – "Noise in Your Head" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I was tempted to write in this top 10 that no bands have really felt as addictive or primal over the past few years and have floored me as intensely as INVASIÓN or DESTINO FINAL. And then the other day this shows up in my mail box. If you 've been craving the intense, raw energy of those heavy hitters but with more layers of noise, then you have a winner of a wide holed flat non-vinyl chloride disc here, punks! So get your adaptor out and get ready.

ROTTEN U.K. – "Bloody Hell!!" EP (Black Rebel)
This debut 7" from ROTTEN U.K. captures '82 in its purest essence! It is a little irksome to have yet another modern day American band rip the sounds of Thatcher-era punk down to the British accent (and they're not even from Portland, they're from upstate New York!). But I digress, this 7" is like bubble gum for anyone who loves studs, Brit Punk and glue. One would swear they were straight from the era they echo. The track "Blood on Your Boots" is a true hit—if you're skeptic of this band's perfection, give that song a listen. Sid lives! (Amelia)

BELLICOSE MINDS – "The Spine" LP (Blackwater)
BELLICOSE MINDS was the first of the recent waves of bands on the darker side of punk, besides SPECTERS, that I could get on board with that wasn't from the 1980s. "Visions of Pain" and "Bloody Hands" made the cut off their 2010 demo onto this LP. Their demo was very limited but very, very good. It was one of those perfect demos you listen to repeatedly for years and never tire of. I'm glad more people can hear two of those tracks on a suitable vinyl format if they could not get a hold of the cassette or the self-titled EP. As for the newer material, it does not disappoint. The Laura Lint insert art is a plus. Overall, another solid release from these Portland greats Blackwater Records.

QUANGO – "Fatality" EP (First World Problems)
The members of this band list a significant repertoire of previous and current bands but the sound of QUANGO stands on its own. This EP consists of three of the four existing demo tracks the band apparently recorded in a garage in South London. Erik of Social Napalm Records sums up England's QUANGO best as sounding "like a lost Rough Trade release from '79." (Amelia)

THISCLOSE – "Burnin' Anger" EP (AntiSociety) + "Fear and Terror" EP (Our Future)
I've had my fill of DISCHARGE irony and clones but any late-era DISCHARGE fan will get a kick out of all the blatant and subtle references to DISCHARGE that this band executes with impeccable style. THISCLOSE is more than a novelty—it's a pure piss off to anyone who grabbed on to the recent raw Punk fad a little too hard—time to move onto the next genre du jour. I think THISCLOSE is a good reminder to not take ourselves too seriously. Thanks to these Scottish Punks, we may be emerging into an era of grave new beat. So exchange your soap for hairspray and let the UK86 reign supreme! (Amelia)

ST. RIPPER – "Agony of the Mind" EP (No Label)
This album hooks you in from the first riff and holds you by the balls. These tough broads play straightforward snotty Punk with no frills. These Boston ladies' debut 7" comes with an attitude. (Amelia)

Live Moments:

ABSOLUT – I feel as though I haven 't made it out to many shows in the past year. I've been feeling jaded from the fallout of the "Raw Chaotic Noise Punk Beat Bullshit D-vastation" and a general lack of, well, Punk these days. Come to think of it, it had to be some sort of fluke for me to be out of the city as nobody goes to Worcester on purpose. But anyway, regardless of why I was there—nothing at that gig (literally) got me out of my seat like ABSOLUT! That band really had it! Strong Hardcore Punk!!! Powerful guitar leads, aggressive in-your-face vocals! Hammering drums! It got my blood going. I could feel it rushing through my veins! And for fuck's sake, it was played by fucking Punks and yes, fuck you, that matters! These guys were the breath of Raw Punk fresh air I needed and from what I understand have a vinyl offering forthcoming. (Ghost)

ANASAZI – Always a treat to see New York's Violent Goth Punks and crew. (Amelia & Ghost)

EEL – EEL's West Coast tour was a live experience with sparks from the singer's grinder and a feeling that the show was not safe. I personally believe that Punk is not supposed to be safe and that anyone who disagrees needs to get out. This band live is a blatant noise attack that is not for the weak of heart. There is a blatant disrespect for your physical welfare and your future ability to hear while giving you the perfect setting to pogo your arse off and lose your mind. (Amelia)

DEATH – It was Halloween night in Oakland and Detroit's DEATH played. I had just seen the documentary *A Band Called Death* a few months prior and have a profound respect for the band that was Punk before Punk as we know it was recognized as even existing. They played all the old hits and kept the new material to a minimum. Even without David Hackney (RIP) they still had the same soul and depth as the early days. So, keep on knocking! (Amelia)

BOMBINGS – Opening their set with the sounds of gunshots to an unsuspecting bar crowd a week after a cop was murdered by the Marathon Bombing Suspects mere blocks away. (Ghost)

WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? – Buying hairspray downtown with a member of WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? while the entire city of Boston was on lockdown, pre-trying to escape Boston for NY's Alright fest. (Ghost)

KOWARD/GREEN BERET/PRIMITIVE PACT/ THE EPIDEMIC (no mention of the cowards who bailed, day of!) – Running this gig on Devil's Night a stone's throw from Fenway Park while the Red Sox won the World Series. Punks who braved the barricades danced beneath the city while norms and cops turned it into a fucking war zone. (Ghost)

CONFLICT – Live in Connecticut. I was a bit hesitant after hearing the fabled tales of CONFLICT's disappointing gig at The Middle East in Cambridge, MA in the early 2000s. They did play some reggae

bits but there were no band members spotted wearing sweatpants. They actually put on an impressive and energetic show. Playing all the hits. It was inspiring watching them perform and an honor to meet them. (Ghost)

LIFE IS POSERS – By far the most sincere, witty commentary on the Punk scene I've read. The by-product of Rufio The Punk, a long time member of, and contributor to the Boston Punk and US Street Punk scenes. (Ghost)

Final Words:
Some final words from Ghost:
RIP Richard Ramirez, RIP Ronnie Biggs
Some honorable mentions: PRIMITIVE PACT, CONTINGENT, SAVAGE HEADS, KNIVES, SUNSHINE WARD, L.O.T.I.O.N., PEACE BREAKERS, BATTLE RUINS, ZIPPER HEAD, Boiler Room crew and extended family. RIP BKB.

Some final words from Amelia to those keeping Punk alive (RIP Nick Poot):
Zines: *Defiant Pose, Stitches in my Head, More Noize, Stupid Question* and *Ratcharge*.

Top Labels that Released in 2013:
Radiation Reissues in Italy (especially for BLITZ's *Time Bomb Early Singles And Demos Collection* LP, La Vida Es Un Mus, Smartguy Records for the DIVISION FOUR *'83 Demo* 12", Who Can You Trust? in Germany, Doomed to Extinction, Distort Reality, Fermented Chaos, Blow Blood, Overdose, and Our Future.

Top Record Stores: Blackwater, Thrillhouse, Armageddon shops, 1234 Go!, Sorry State and Radiation.

Top Newer Bands of 2013: PRIMITIVE PACT, HÄVITTÄJÄT, BLAZING EYE, PIG DNA, GRIMA, ROSA APÁTRIDA, CRUOR, APOCALYPSE NOW, ILLEGALS, SUNSHINE WARD, CONTINGENT and PARADOX.

Also international Punks, please stop sending me mail at the MRR PO Box. My address is: PO Box 84, Oakland, CA 94604. UP THE PUNX! ANOK4U2!!

FILIP FUCHS / HLUBOKA ORBA ZINE

SOME GOOD 2013 RECORDS IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER:

LIFE – "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" LP (Punk Bastard)
Blasting their manic MOB 47-on-fire raw punk (though they had a certain period of stenchcore influence as well) since the early '90s, contemporaries of DISCLOSE, GLOOM or FRAMTID, but always kind of "in the shadow" and not a super-popular band, unlike the other Japanese raw punk bands past and present. Also with some of the best lyrics around, many of them in defense of nature and planet Earth (some SEDITION / SCATHA reference maybe?) The new LP has mostly new songs and a few from previous releases, but re-recorded with the new (two guitars!) line-up, including three smashers from their excellent 1995 debut *Freedom and Liberation* EP. Total "back to the roots" turn, so you can expect more MOB 47 worship, but sometimes you can hear an unexpected Burning Spirits-style solo and there are a couple of slower songs as well. With 22 songs (including a cover of DISCLOSE) in total and playing time like 40 minutes or more, this records manages to keep the energy from start to finish. Killer!

ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS / VIOLENT ARREST – split EP (Artcore)
Released along with the new issue of the great Welsh *Artcore* zine, this record has two current UK bands—E.G.S. play just one longer and totally urgent song in the vein of ANTISECT (the comparison they are probably totally tired of). Also some tasty use of John Heartfield's graphics in the inner sleeve! VIOLENT ARREST do two short explosions of fast hardcore not unlike early '80s Boston hardcore bands. A half or three quarters of VIOLENT ARREST were in RIPCORD and I am happy to see these old fuckers not doing another questionable greedy/mid-life crisis reunion (enough of this shit already!), but playing new songs under new name instead. And they manage to sound totally relevant, even in 2013 (GERIATRIC UNIT is another good example of this). And the zine is a great read too!

NIGHTFALL – "Fear" LP (Shogun)
I like the new FRAMTID LP, but you will read about it everywhere in this issue and NIGHTFALL's debut LP is in the same league for me, as I hear some '80s Swedish raw punk influence, some DOOM demo tapes era shit and yeah, also some FRAMTID here. The delivery is brutal; the lyrics are great and the typical black and white graphics apocalyptic as expected. Not reinventing the wheel here, but sounding pretty good to me, also this is raw punk played by people, who've done this for like ten or fifteen years already and will probably play this style forever. Shogun was one of my favorite labels of last few years (get the APPÄRATUS, PEACE OR ANNIHILATION or STATE POISON records, while they are still available!), too bad they decided to stop recently.

NEKROMANTIKER – LP (SPHC)
Dutch noisy punk with ear-piercing guitar, primitive pogo-beat and screaming vocals and while many of the current noise punk bands (whole columns are dedicated to this shit in *MRR*, I don't know why) do nothing to me, this one is pretty good. Like a more ignorant, noisy and amateurish CHAOS UK, but it works. It has this cool and unpretentious "anybody can do this" feeling / charm too. Also I don't think they are the typical ex-Quincy Punx turned to noisepunk / crasher crust idiots, which is a subgenre sadly so popular in the US, so it helps too.

VILE INTENT – "Skin in the Game" EP (Choking Hazard)
This young Canadian band played in my city last year, touring Europe in a total DIY way without the help of professional crust agencies and they destroyed everybody live... also they were forced to play couple of encores to their fifteen minutes long / short set (maybe the first encores in their existence?). This is their newest EP and while, the CROSSED OUT influence is huge here, it still sounds totally relevant and fresh. Scary and brutal!

PIG//CONTROL – "First" EP + "Trauma" EP (HeartFirst)
Manic, distorted and drenched in feedback raw hardcore from Berlin with brutal German vocals from ex-BOMBENA
can tell that the lyrics are great too—denouncing the nationalism and rejecting the fucked up history of their country. Noisy, but with clever song writing, playing actual songs; this band is luckily not another "vacuum cleaners going wild" bullshit. Can't wait to see them live.

MÜLLTÜTE – "Exzess" EP (HeartFirst)
Same singer, but playing guitar too and drummer, like Deutsch punk version of ACTIVE MINDS—stripped down, totally basic punk as fuck shit. Similar feeling to above-mentioned NEKROMATIKER LP; anybody can do this... so why there are only few bands doing this?

RAD – "Loud And Fast" LP (Phonoselect / Sacramento)
There are dozens (maybe hundreds?) bands influenced by early '80s US hardcore, but RAD is the best one of this genre I have heard in a long time. Sounding like early D.R.I. or more like the FIX and NEOS seven inches or the DEEP WOUND demo, with a non-stop barrage of killer vocals, some catchy guitar parts, five seconds long solos and relentless machine-gun drumming. I totally love this style, when it's done right and this band from Sacramento play it so fucking good! The kind of band which would fit on 625 label ten years ago. I also liked their recent *MRR* interview a lot and they were some of the coolest people my band met on our recent West Coast tour, making us feel welcome in their home-town and treating us same way we treat (or in our case *used* to treat) the American bands playing here in Brno: food, drinks, good PA, working mics and similar weird, unusual shit, you know? Well, many of you probably don't know and will hardly ever know.

INNOXIA CORPORA / TELEFON – split LP (self-released)
This split has two long running Czech punk bands coming from the same area (somewhere between Australia and Ukraine, you know), who almost nobody outside Czech, with the exception of few die-hard fans of "international" (=non-American?) hardcore/punk know about. INNOXIA CORPORA play totally rocking punk with great anthemic vocals and TELEFON does something similar, but also with some faster hardcore blasts like early M.D.C. for example. Great, poetic/political lyrics, "typical" Eastern European punk shit.

VOĈO PROTESTA – "Neniam Konfidu al la Stato" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I follow this band since their first demo and during the ten years of their existence they sound better and better—totally honest raw punk / D-beat with clear South American / Spanish influences (they also do an IV REICH cover here) and anarchist lyrics sung in Esperanto. Same as LIFE, they are not one of these most popular bands of this style in Japan or outside Japan, but they don't give a fuck. I saw them live couple of times in Tokyo and there was usually an utter silence from the audience between their songs and after their (noisy!) set. It would be great to see them live over here, I am sure these gigs would be more wild.

CHORNAYA RADUGA – "All of Us Will Fly..." EP (Tian An Men 89)
My fave record from the newest pile of releases this label released in 2013 (DETOX/BEIRUT SCUM SOCIETY split EP is pretty good too!). This post-punk band from Transnistria sounds a bit like GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA; similar urgency, similar sad, but defiant music, just with much better/cleaner sound, (obviously today it's stupid to expect new recordings sound even close to the sound of GROB's illegal home recorded tapes of the late '80s). With GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA being one of my favorite bands and Tian An Men 89 being one of my favorite labels (insert "ever" and "all the time"), this was easy to pick.

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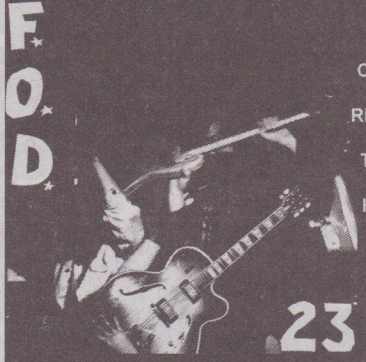

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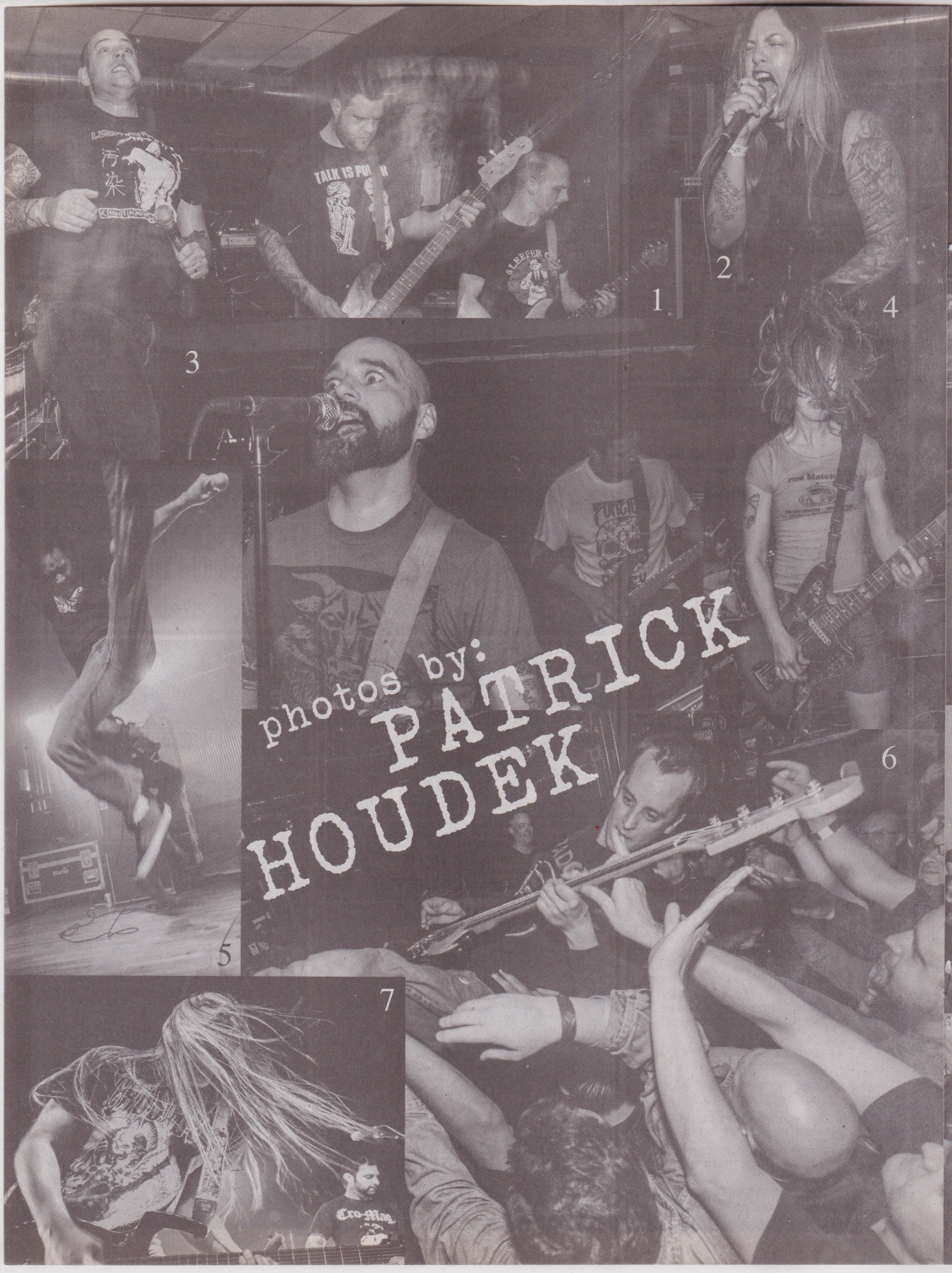

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2
3
4
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1: MANIPULATION, 2: CRIATURAS, 3: KONTAMINAT,
4: LIPSTICK HOMICIDE, 5: THE BOLLWEEVILS,
6: PEGBOY, 7: 88 FINGERS LOUIE, 8: FULL ON,
9: SHIT FOR BRAINS, 10: LOS CRUDOS

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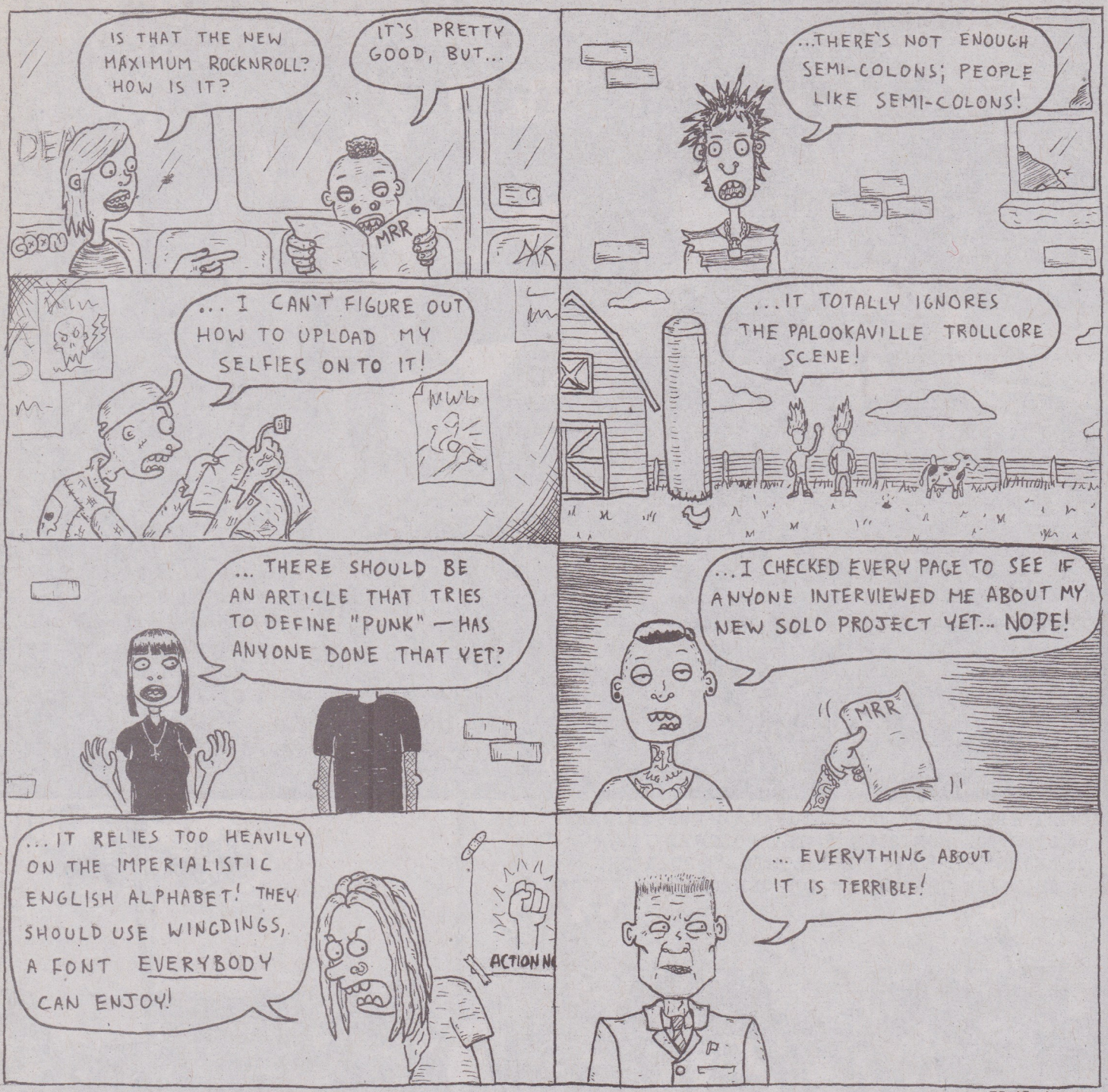

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RAFAEL CABESA

I know, who the fuck is this guy? Well I am Rafael, a punk from Venezuela (South America) that moved to Vancouver a year ago. I play in a few bands, do a small zine and have a small record label. I like punk. I wake up everyday thinking about punk. I am passionate about it.

So, MRR *asked to name and say a few words about the soundtrack for this year. I had more access to punk paraphernalia this year than ever before in my life. People seem to press everything on vinyl these days. So instead I will prioritize on demo tapes and live shows—where punk and DIY actually happens, where the bands dub the tapes and don't wait passively to be released by a label and then tell everyone how cool they are.*

TEN GOOD DEMO TAPES:

BIG ZIT – (self-released)

Let's start the list with something I actually don't have. I just have it on a mix-tape. Yes, I am a poser. Hope *MRR* doesn't kill me for this. But *fuck me!* This is some of the best stuff that came out this year from North America. BIG ZIT is the shit. The BAD BRAINS influence is just all over the place. It will always surprise me that small towns sometimes produce the best bands. I want to go to Indiana and spin with my arms open to "Yer Moshing" and probably get shot by a white supremacist for having fun.

MUERTE – (self-released)

Bum!!! In my face. This demo has an INSERVIBLES/dark/not-fake-goth vibe. Mexico City is dark and crazy. Fast passed and happy at the same time. MUERTE's demo is the soundtrack for the city. It makes me happy that somewhere on Peten St. in Mexico City a band is jamming in a small garage room. People will walk by, not knowing one of the best bands in the world is jamming right there. Punk is cool. "A La Verga" is the hit.

LA MISMA – (Toxic State)

The song from the NYC compilation blew my mind. The demo is as good. It is easy to compare them to AS MERCENÁRIAS from Brazil since the vocalist sings in Portuguese and everyone involved is female. But shit is deep, intense. I am proud that this stuff comes out. I feel it is a big "fuck you" to the male-dominated punk scene without saying it. LA MISMA is an important band, and I am proud of it. Maybe this feeling is just some stupid paternalist bullshit...

FLACCID – second (Harsh Reality)

Punk is cool. You can like a band, send a letter and get a demo. This is what happened with FLACCID. I love it. This second demo is as good as the first. This demo will be available to the masses on the 7" format this year. Boston hardcore punk is cool. Your goth band is not.

ORIGEN – "La Mancha Humana" (self-released)

The members of ORIGEN are the nicest people you might encounter in this horrible world full of injustice. Anarchist and punks from Barcelona, Spain. These girls and boys knew what they were going into. South American-influenced punk that reminds me of the "Medellin sound" from the '80s/early '90s. Three quarters of this band are playing their instruments/singing for the first time. So when I tell you it is primitive, it is for real. What if I told you they share members with FIRMEZA 10, CRIMEN DE ESTADO and the wonderful LAS TÍMIDAS? Are you in? Plus all the money from this tape goes to La Pinya, a libertarian school from Barcelona.

SAVAGEHEADS – (self-released)

I have a secret, I love the EXPLOITED. UK82 is a category that has been through around really easy for the past ten years. That is something I take seriously despite my ignorance on UK82. SAVAGEHEADS are good. No, they are awesome! From Boston, these punks with 1-2 drumming, catchy-as-hell guitars and sing-along vocals make me want to jump up and down forever until I lose some weight. PARTISANS are there as a main influence but I like to think that SAVAGEHEADS are just a big tribute to the good old English sound. Hope these people are as cool as their music.

GRUMP – 2013 tape + "Love Punk Hate Punks" (self-released)

Cody, the person that records all the good bands that come out of Halifax, Canada, is playing bass in this band. I think GRUMP is Halifax's best band right now. And if this list were numbered, this would be probably in the first three positions. It is harsh, depressing, dark hardcore that is perfectly recorded. Mind numbing, repetitive and spaced out guitars riffs that follow a "tupa-tupa" drumming that never stops. Perfect.

FRAU – (Tuff Enuff)

LAS TÍMIDAS, WOOLF, GOOD THROB and FOSA COMUN people play in this band. Normally I don't give a shit about those kind of details. But when we are talking about all those awesome bands, I am curious. These wonderful ladies produce noisy, basic, in-your-face peace punk music. Something that could have been released by Crass Records in the '80s. The cool thing is that FRAU is not even trying. It feels real, not a stupid, gimmicky '80s-sounding band with cool hairstyles and jackets. FRAU probably has awesome hairstyles and beautiful jackets anyway. The difference is that they are actually good, real and with something to say.

Lumpy Records – all 2013 tapes

OK, this is lame, I know. Saying that 11+ tapes deserve only a paragraph is just dumb. But I didn't want to put all the Lumpy Record releases in this list. I would look like an ass-kisser. I need to look cool, you know... Martin is a punk. I like him. He does this tape label and he sells his tapes for nothing. All of them are DIY as fuck and deserve to be in this list. But for me the best bands Mr. Lumpy released this year were: CAL AND THE CALORIES, BLACK PANTIES, VIOLATIONS, ANIMAL TEETH and, of course, LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS.

ANXIETY – 2012 tape (Glue Man)

OK, this was released in the last days of 2012 and didn't make it into the 2012 Year End Top Tens, so fuck yeah, it counts. North America (and the world) is full of posers with WRETCHED T-shirts, or people that name Italian bands as their influence all the time. It makes me sad. Because most of the times the music these people produce is just crust diarrhea. ANXIETY are a bunch of cool kids in Malmö, Sweden that know their shit, their Italian shit to be precise. They produce the craziest hardcore possible. I want to be their friends so bad, but they never answer my emails.

NINE GOOD LIVE BANDS:

FIRMEZA 10

I always say it. F10 is maybe the best band to ever come out of this planet. Live they were as good as I was expecting. So intense, real musical destruction and anarchy. Shit was honest, simple and good. Angela ran to the crowd screaming as hard as she could, Jan the drummer was dying of excitement while playing and Teo was going to explode while playing the guitar. Gives me chills just by remembering.

DRAPETOMANIA

DRAPETOMANIA is one of the most important bands from the last five years. Highly underestimated in my opinion, live they were as good as I was expecting. Their songs are catchy, sing-along, Oi!-influenced and Latino as fuck. Saw them twice and they were awesome both times. It is sad that they broke up.

CROSTA

Their record was so good. Even though it was bashed

by *MRR*, I consider CROSTA's LP one of the best to come out last year. Live were as intense, if not more. Everybody knew their lyrics. CROSTA will be remembered as one of the best in Barcelona.

GENERACIÓN SUICIDA

Saw them twice. One in a huge stage and fuck they played fast. But I also saw them the next day under a bridge and it blew my mind. Kiwi the drummer is one of the best I have seen in my life. These people really feel their songs and you can tell. All of them screaming their lyrics at the same time, even though they don't have microphones. The show under the bridge was illegal, at 4:00 AM and one of the best I saw this year.

LAS OTRAS

I just love these girls and saw them play three times this year. Best anarchist/feminist hardcore band from Barcelona. HARD BITCH, a local band from Vancouver, played with them in the city. It was awesome to see LAS OTRAS play in an open environment being supported. I had a blast.

ABSURDO

Saw ABSURDO three times this year as well. Memorable moments included seeing Ian the vocalist fly over people here in Vancouver. Also ABSURDO played in a small town called Kamloops here in BC. I think it was one of the most important moments in hardcore history in Canada. Only like five people saw them play…

ANXIETY

Story goes like this. My lame band was in Malmö, Sweden for no reason. The promoter got a call from this band ANXIETY that was playing with us. They called to say that they were coming straight from school to the bar. Then sixteen-to-seventeen-year-old kids come in to the bar with their instruments. Set their amps and shit and drums in the weirdest set up I have ever seen. The kids looked like the Hanson brothers: young and longhaired. As soon as they started playing, our faces just melted. All the "cool old Swedish punk scene" were there and they got their asses kicked so bad. Then we played and obviously we couldn't pull it off. These kids were insane, really. They showed that new blood is always needed and that we were all a bunch of old farts.

ORDEN MUNDIAL

Story goes like this. ORDEN MUNDIAL is one of the best live bands ever. Their vocalist Bernat is insane. And they like Italian hardcore for real. Enough said. Anger = fun.

VACANT STATE

Finally a local band, VACANT STATE is one of those bands I want to experience live only. I think records will never capture the angry performance they always give. Terry is the vocalist of this band. He is a natural anti-social, the real thing. He doesn't talk to people, not because he is too cool, no. I think he is tired, angry as fuck. He is full of hate. He is in this band, into punk, not for the social bullshit. Rather he just sees it as a way out. I am a fan of VACANT STATE.

ELEVEN GOOD RECORDS:

MAQUINA MUERTA – "Maquina De Muerte" EP (Metadona)

Top hardcore 7" to ever come from South America. I can't believe nobody talks about this 7". Probably because is from Mexico and not the USA. This is how anarchy sounds like. Rabia, Rabia, Rabia! Rabia contra el Sistema!

GENERACIÓN SUICIDA – "Con la Muerte A Tu Lado" 12" (Going Underground)

A classic, this shit is passionate as fuck. GENERACIÓN SUICIDA is there with the BAGS and the BRAT. Not with the hipster Swedish band they are always compared to.

ECTOPLASM – "Drone" EP (Vinyl Rites)

Awesome and passionate. One of the few North American 7" that actually mattered. From the awful Florida to the world.

CREMALLERAS – LP (Cintas Pepe)

Snotty and sloppy female-fronted punk. Reminds me of CHUTE DE ESPERMA. Forever in love with this LP. This label release only good shit and CREMALLERAS are as good as it gets.

PROXY – "Police Car" EP (Discos MMM)

Catchy and better than the LP. Hit after hit after hit. I love when this band loses the MOTÖRHEAD influence and embrace the good old BLITZ catchiness.

SPECTRES – "Nothing to Nowhere" LP (Deranged / Sabotage)

I hate most modern goth releases. This is a fucking classic. If this record was released in the '80s, people would be doing tribute bands for Halloween all the time. I like the people in this band so I am totally biased. Vancouver's soundtrack.

LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – "Sex Pit" EP (Muckraker)

This is how sexy music sounds like. This is what I dance to. Nasty hardcore that doesn't think being a "weirdo" is cool. Simple and original. LUMPY and company love hardcore and punk in general. This is their interpretation and I like it.

DAVE RATA – "Hallucigenia" LP (Bat Shit)

"Al Chile Soy Punk" is possible this year hymn for most Latino American punks or at least it should be. RUDIMENTARY PENI meets the IGUANAS. Recording is perfect on this LP.

GAS RAG – "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment)

Love it. OLHO SECO/US hardcore influenced punk. Vocalist actually knows how to do a different spin on the vocals. Don't really understand the glue-sniffing references but still a masterpiece.

ABSURDO – "Barcelona 92/Vacio" flexi (Discos Absurds)

Catchy as hell. Even better than the EP and the 7". ABSURDO is best at the slow songs. "Barcelona 92" is there between "Anti-USA" and "Las Malvinas Son Pinguinas." Entre los grandes.

V/A – "Not Normal Presents… Welcome to 2013" LP (Not Normal)

One of the best compilations in recent memory. Everything screen-printed and just full of awesomeness. Plus INSERVIBLES, HONDARTZAKO HONDAKINAK, GOOD THROB and BROWN SUGAR are on it.

REISSUES:

HYSTERIA WARD *From Breakfast to Madness* LP (General Speech), E.A.T.E.R. *Doomsday Troops* EP (Loud Punk / Hardcore Survives), KLAXON *1984* LP (Sydney Town), HERPES – *Medellín* EP (Fuck Yoga), ATAQUE DE SONIDO *Monotonía* EP (Fuck Yoga), B.S.N. *Subterraneo Medellin* LP (Ruido Total / Mierdallo / Noseke / Insurreccion Nomada / Darbouka / Crow Music / Ilegal / Sin Temores).

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

GOOD THROB *Culture Vulture* EP (Muscle Horse, wow! Missing physical copy), V/A *Harsh and Hard* tape (Feel It, wow!), LAS OTRAS *Devolver El Golpe* 12" (Discos Sense Nom, a punch in the face), SACRIFICIO demo tape (Mexico's finest), GLAM *Veveno En Sus Flechas* 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus, Auuuuu!), DHK *La Krudeza No Muerte* LP (La Vida Es Un Mus, buena mierda!), VOCO PROTESTA *Nemiam Konfidu al la Stato* 12" (La Vide Es Un Mus, IV REICH cover is so good), VARIX – *I Can't Get Out* EP (Fashionable Idiots, perfect), MORBO *Me Llega Al Pincho 2002-2004* EP (Sin Temores / Rock SVB), GENERACIÓN SUICIDA – *Mil Amores* EP (Mata la Musica), IRREPARABLES – 12" (Nominal), ANTIDROGA/VENGANZA split 12" (Actua / Canya! / Ginger Beer / Proukouskaya).

TONY GUNNARSON

In 2013, more than in any other year ever, I listened to more old than new records. My obsession with Kyushu punk reached a breaking point this year, thanks to improved access to Fukuoka record boxes. I have also been busy expanding my Swedish and Finnish 1980s record collection—no doubt like everyone else, I am sure. As for new releases, of course I continue to closely monitor the Finnish, Swedish, Japanese and English hardcore scenes as I always do, but I'd be a liar if I did not admit to being more interested in old music than new music in 2013.

Having started a personal boycott of USHC in 2013, I've missed out on a lot of new US records that my peers talked about during the year, but as most of these US bands basically just rehash old Swedish, Finnish, English and Japanese bands, I figured I might as well just stick with the original bands anyway. As long as the US continues to enjoy cultural hegemony in the world, along with its overwhelming economical and military dominance, I feel that US punk bands should not automatically be given a similar preferential privilege unless a band has proven that it is A) politically radical, and/or B) musically leftfield. Did you know that the SHITLICKERS actually meant something with the song "Warsystem"? Instead of stealing the chords to "Warsystem" for the opening track of your band's inevitable 7" EP, why don't you take a look around you and write a real punk song for once? One controversial word, repeated four times. That's the minimum effort required to create a timeless radical hardcore classic. Express your anger in clear, unambiguous language and let your feelings inspire the music you write. Ignore Tumblr, Instagram and social networks; stop listening to and stealing from non-US hardcore from the 1980s.

Here are a few records that came out in 2013 that I do recall spending a sufficient amount of beer-drinking time with, in order to qualify making this list. Needless to say, La Vida Es Un Mus Records dominated the charts in 2013 as always.

FRAMTID – "Defeat of Civilization" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

This is a no-brainer. If this is not on your top ten list, then you're not a punk. I hope I will see FRAMTID at my local pub in 2014. Go on, make my dreams come true.

ZYANOSE – "Why There Grieve?" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

This is here on the basis of a successful world tour. I had so much fun when ZYANOSE played at the Grosvenor Pub in Stockwell. The production of the album is top notch, along the lines of the preceding LPs by fellow Osaka punx FRAMTID and KRIEGSHÖG on the same label.

VOĈO PROTESTA – "Neniam Konfidu Al La Ŝtato" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Second LP from this band that is starting to become something of a "below radar" band. Still as great as the first LP, and as if the rest of the world does not exist. One word: Perfect!

KYLMÄ SOTA / RAJOITUS – split EP (Svart)

This is an odd one. In my eyes, KYLMÄ SOTA can do no wrong—they're one of my favourite bands and if you read my shit you don't need reminding that I have written extensively about the band in the past. However, I felt that the best band on this record is actually RAJOITUS, a band that I oddly enough remember as being fairly generic. Oops! Totally wrong!! I look forward to hearing the forthcoming RAJOITUS split LP in 2014 with very hard excitement indeed.

ネメシス – "暁鐘" EP (Flower of Carnage)

Fukuoka new generation punx! This second EP is just like the first, a smashing killer hardcore record that will make everyone want to pogo and raise their fists and spit forth anger and fury. So what that it sounds like a million bands before? This is perfect.

CHAOSCHANNEL – "(Magic Bullet) That Works to Feed the Pig" EP (SPHC)

While due to be released in time for the band's USA tour in November 2012, I think this EP only came out in early 2013. Hey, I've said enough about this band before. The same continues to apply.

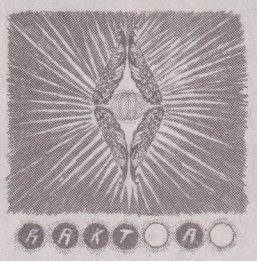
LIFE – "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" LP (Punk Bastard)

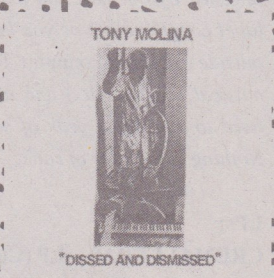
When this came out, I texted Paco to ask if I needed to buy this, and being the shrewd businessman that he is, the answer was of course yes. I then took it home and let it collect dust until I started doing this end of the year list and noticed it on someone else's list. How could I forget about this? Fuck. Well, what do you want me to say? It's a hardcore record, not a piece of literature. Go buy it and make your own opinion, OK?

HARD SKIN – "Why Do Birds Suddenly Appear" LP + "On the Balls" LP (JT Classics)

I had a chat about HARD SKIN with my friend Sned outside the Birds Nest pub in South London waiting for the Japanese band PEOPLE to arrive to play the first gig of their one-week UK tour. I think I started by saying that I had played this record—it's the same songs released twice, once with the usual "manly" vocals and another with female guest vocals—a lot in the year and that I had actually asked if HARD SKIN would play at the North London gig with PEOPLE (in the end, DISORDER played instead, with great success). I forgot what Sned said or much of the rest of the conversation, but PEOPLE were great. They came straight from Heathrow after a fifteen-hour flight from Japan and played without even taking off their jackets.

PISTOL JOKE – "We Just Shit"

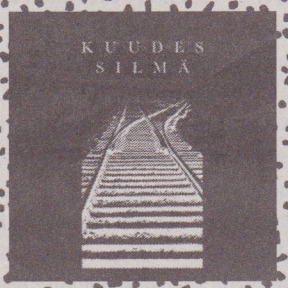




EP (Noise Punk)
Shit music everywhere kill professional punx! Gah! Fuck you!

INSTITUTION – "Världens Ändstation" EP (D-Takt & Råpunk)
This EP is technically disqualified as these songs were recorded at the same session as the album (2012). Moreover, as more or less a studio band, INSTITUTION should not be on this list anyway (actually I think the band played recently). But who cares? This is 2013 we're talking about and if you go looking for an organic and unadulterated and authentic hardcore punk band à la 1980, you will be heartedly disappointed. For those who don't know, INSTITUTION is a "superheroes of Swedish hardcore punk" band, including Poffen from TOTTIS and Jallo from every Swedish hardcore band you ever liked, with the bass player and drummer of HERÄTYS (the band that took the TOTTIS sound and merged it with the sound of every band Jallo ever played in). To celebrate the 50th release on the D-Takt & Råpunk Records in 2013, I had actually interviewed INSTITUTION for *MRR*, I guess you'll have to wait and see that in 2014… and that—like Sid Vicious said—"that's life"!!!

DISORDER – "Distort Bristol" LP (Uncompromising Bastard)
You know what? It's my end of the year party and I do what I want to. Coming in as a steady #11 in this top ten list is this reissue record, that is not really a reissue as it contains songs that not even the band knew existed or had heard for over three decades. The label that released this record spared no ammunition in calling it the most important reissue of one of the most important punk bands of all times—and you know what? That is entirely true and appropriate. DISORDER is surely at least as influential a hardcore punk band as DISCHARGE. This album presents the earliest incarnation of the band (which continues to play to this day, and with new guitarist Alex the current line-up sounds fucking great, too!!) in the best sound quality possible. Uncompromising Bastard Records deserves the punk rock Pulitzer prize for the best record released in the last decade. Now fuck you.



LAYLA GIBBON

As always there were things I listened to relentlessly that didn't make this list because of company policy (i.e. no records that were released by an indie but distributed by a major label conglomerate or you know, music that falls outside of the Maximum Rocknroll *realm for musical reasons etc.) and as always it is really hard to sum up a year of sound using words… Nothing is in order of rank.*

LPs:

CREMALLERAS – LP (Cintas Pepe)
From the insane cover art to the sounds on the vinyl this is insidious genius; scrape your eyes out bloodthirsty raw punk that hasn't left my listening pile since I got it. Fucking sick sounds and the definition of punk, Violetta's voice marking the end of time in musical format. If you dug the song she sang on the last RATAS DEL VATICANOS LP grab this ASAP!

COURTNEYS – 12" (Hockey Dad)
Goofy charming CLEAN tribute record by three women who write the most ridiculous yet heartfelt lyrics over music that makes me feel the same way I do after listening to LOOK BLUE GO PURPLE's "Cactus Cat." Sound of the summer, and of skating with your friends, aimless and fearless.

VIXENS – 12" (La Vida En Un Mus)
Their demo tape was one of the best of the decade for me, I was nervous about the LP, because you know, recording studios and vinyl can't help but make things more professional and tidy… But the LP rules, sick HC by an all female group that brings to mind the song "Explode" by VOID, a rare and noble feat. They rule and this record demonstrates that fact.

STILLSUIT – LP (self-released)
Oakland's only band. Protection against being the only women on the last train home. Will make you want to start a band with the meanest and coolest girls in town. Like LYDIA LUNCH formed a hardcore band, but is this HC? It is the most. You know that SLITS song "So Tough?" This is the answer to that question.

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Observant Com el Mon es Destrueix" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Yet another soundtrack to the end of the world: creative destruction, brutalist realism and a response to our endtimes capitalist degradation in musical form; doesn't feel like a lecture, feels like an invitation to the apocalypse.

IRREPARABLES – 12" (Nominal)
Songs about making fanzines and mixtapes, but also about spitting on the pope, the disdainful vocals espousing ideas we can all get behind. UKDIY style like the best post DESPERATE BICYCLES sounds, stuck in a stormy English seaside town making dreary yet dreamy sounds reflecting our dreams both crushed and hopeful… This was a tape but now it's an LP. Get it or regret it!

CONSTANT MONGREL – "Heavy Breathing" 12" (Siltbreeze)
Somewhere between the dirge/Xpressway that seems to have infected all Australian music of interest as of recent times and the UKDIY spiel of the first LP. A good place to be stuck.

HOUSEHOLD – "Elaines" 12" (Dull Knife)
Sparse reflections on a certain reality, sort of

somewhere between YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS and the RAINCOATS with some added early EMBARRASMENT maybe? It's got the sound of radical feminist punk of the '70s, smart art school girls making nervous deconstructed punk music for other nervous girls ready to deconstruct society/punk etc.

ANGIE – "Turning" LP (Easter Bilby)
Droning monotone yowl that sounds ideal on good headphones when it feels like there's no solution; like a slow motion ROYAL TRUX playing early CHROME, downers and doubt.

POTTY MOUTH – "Hell Bent" LP (Marshall Teller / Old Flame) + CRAZY BAND – "Live from Prison" LP (Teenage Teardrops)
POTTY MOUTH combine the melancholic BRATMOBILE songs with the force of early DINOSAUR JR., Homestead Records rather than K Records ya know? CRAZY BAND sound like suburban car park boredom, basement bands, underage cheap beer, in short skate for fun or not at all. Somewhere between JFA and XRAY SPEX. I couldn't pick between these two acts.

Also: GUN OUTFIT / HOAX / FLOOR ABOVE / AUSMUTEANTS / SHOPPING / RUBY PINS / SCRAPER / HARD SKIN / LAS OTRAS / LIFE STINKS / BAD NOIDS / WIRE

EPs:

NOTS – "Dust Red" EP (Goner)
All the ingredients for my ideal 45; KLEENEX girls with a super slight garage lean… Really tough without being a pose, really cool without being a put on. A tough balance to catch, but the band I most excited to hear more 45s from on this list… Vicious / rambunctious: NOTS has the formula down. Cyclotron-core.

PLEASURE LEFTISTS – "Elephant Men/Not Over" (Katorga Works)
My most listened to record. Another close to perfect 45 for 2013. I am not a huge proponent of the post-punk tinged darkwave/deathrock revival that the punk hordes are creating and consuming—this record somewhat exists in that context, but it's miles away from the trite revivalists. Watching PLEASURE LEFTISTS play was transformational. Sound of industrial landscapes in ruin, with more post-Thatcher's Britain dissolute aftermath of punk than deathrock, like NEW ORDER's first 45 not CHRISTIAN DEATH. Haley is an amazing front person, sort of Ian Curtis frantic style in terms of visuals and vocals… Her voice is so cool, like the woman from PYLON meets the aforementioned JOY DIVISION vocalist, hints of chanson too, so insane and rad. I could imagine this band playing with MALARIA! or at the Hacienda.

EASTLINK – "Wild Dogs / Blood Money" (Aarght!)
The EASTLINK 45s that came out last year were from a 2012 tape… Great trebled out synth/guitar thug punk, like a J.G. Ballard book in 45 form. Metal machine music. Sense of humor / sense of style and further evidence that Australians are making the best sounds; can't fucking wait for the LP on In the Red this year.

QUANGO – "Fatality" EP
Like MEKONS meets CRISIS. The guitar line is like a bullet, wired and insurgent, the vocalist intones of public transit crowds complaining about a Trans person's suicide fucking up their commute; the inconvenience and brutality of every day life/griping humanity in a perfect under three minute punk number. Made by ex-members of bands you might have records by—more demonstration that London is the place right now for punkers…

LIFE STINKS – "Shadow on the Wall/You Drag" (Total Punk)
Intellectual lunks, reminiscent of ancient times Cleveland/Detroit, but from current day San Francisco. San Francisco's only? The sound of too much drugs / fast food / nihilistic literature / TV; clumps along like a Quaalude and makes for the ideal 45.

GOOD THROB – "Culture Vulture" EP (Muscle Horse)
Watching this band play was revelatory/incendiary. Liberation and fuck you all in one. Like JOHN BRANNON was a woman and NO TREND was a hardcore band from London. So sick.

PANG – "Attention Deficit Disorder/My Brand of Cigarette" (Play Pinball)
This singer of this band has a similar languid vocal tone to Justine from ELASTICA, and the music makes me think of all the bands that formed after hearing ROXY MUSIC, mixed with UV RACE / TOTAL CONTROL and some sorta *Messthetics* radness. I got so obsessed with this I made someone send me their unreleased tracks (they broke up! Such a bummer), and now I hear those songs are coming out on a 45 and they are playing one more show. Seriously, so cool. Like my birthday everyday.

EX-CON – "Bronzer" (Bon Voyage)
Savage PUSSY GALORE deconstruction from Australia, girl is out for blood and it's as brutal as the first BABES IN TOYLAND record but with no grunge, just fuck you punk in a more gassed in the garage rumble with TEENAGE JESUS or something. Sick as hell.

SAUNA YOUTH – "False Jesii Pt II/Oh Joel" (Static Shock)
The best FLATMATES / SHOP ASSISTANTS / BUBBLEGUM YELL update from a band that's usually operating under very different color schemes. The singer's voice is so cool, makes me wish this band always sounded like this…

COMET GAIN – "Avenue Girls" EP (Where It's At Is Where You Are)
Perfect punk/pop for mod rockers, somewhere between the GOBETWEENS and SUBWAY SECT… Brighton alleyways and Crystal Palace LeyLines.

Also:
KANTUTA / VIDEO / MANATEES / SECTOR ZERO / CAGED ANIMAL / MANE / BRILLIANT COLORS FLEXI / CHEMICAL PEEL / VARIX / REPLICA / LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS

TAPES:
FRAU / LAS TIMIDAS / FAMILY OUTING / TOTAL TRASH / FAILED MUTATION / IN SCHOOL / SHIRTLESS THUGS / PRIESTS / HAG FACE / KIERNAN PARADISE / LA LUZ

REISSUES:
KAOS – "Betonska Djeca" LP (NE!), DIVISION FOUR – "1983 Demo Cassette" 12" (Smart Guy), BONA DISH – "Zaragoza Tapes: 1981-1982" LP (Captured Tracks), PETER GUTTERIDGE – "Pure" 2xLP (540 / Xpressway), THE GRABBIES – "Live" EP (Fashionable Idiots / Distort Reality), EGO SUMMIT – "The Room Isn't Big Enough" LP (540), FOTTUTISSIMA PELLICCERIA ELSA – LP (S.S.), SATAN PANONSKI – "Hard Blood Shock" LP (S.S.), THE KICK – LP + "Close Your Eyes/Adicts" 45 (Static Age), NEO BOYS – "Sooner Or Later" 2xLP (K), VENOM P STINGER – "1986-1991" 2xLP (Drag City)

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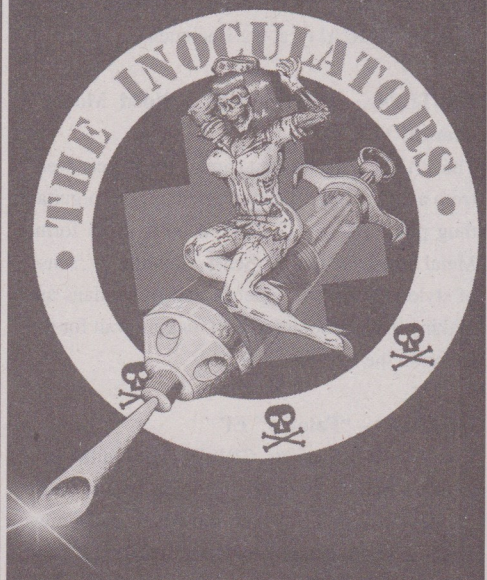

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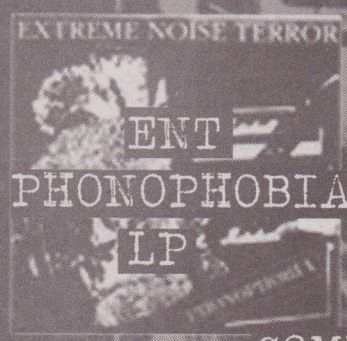

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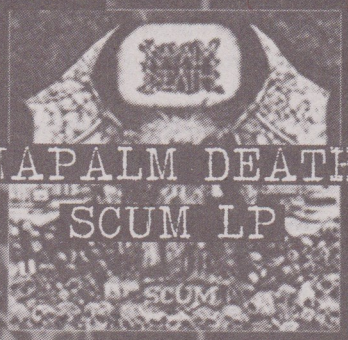

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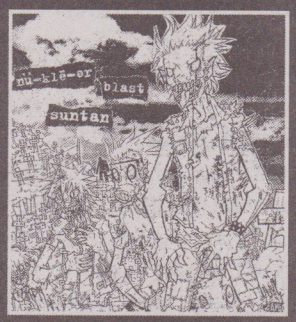

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LPs, 12"s AND 10"s:

FRAMTID – "Defeat of Civilization" LP (Black Water / Crust War / La Vida Es Un Mus)
Eleven years since the previous 12" and FRAMTID did not let me down. No compromises, no mercy, and the power of this band is incredible. The songs are slightly longer than before, but the band has not mellowed down a bit. One of the best crust bands ever.

BELLICOSE MINDS – "The Spine" LP (Black Water)
Post-punk has been one of the trends in 2013. There are now so many bands playing that style that it's inevitable that most of them are just crap to be honest, but the best of them are breathtakingly good. This LP is one of the albums I have listened the most in 2013. There's not a bad song on this record and I don't seem to be able to get tired of listening to it.

UNA BÉSTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Observant Com el Món es Destrueix" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Slightly experimental hardcore from Barcelona. Heavy, distorted and even psychedelic in places. And what's best, they also bring such favorite bands of mine as DESTINO FINAL and INVASIÓN in my mind. I love Spanish punk/hardcore, but 2013 has not been as good year as the previous ones in my opinion. This band, however, manages to keep up the standard I'm used in when it comes to Spanish punk.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – "Call of Death" LP (Feral Ward)
It's been six years since the previous CRIMINAL DAMAGE LP came out and now they are back with a bang. This is as good as their first album. BLITZ influenced punk rock with melodies and catchy sing-a-long choruses. Spirit-lifting material.

BELGRADO – "Siglo XXI" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
BELGRADO has really progressed, this is better than their (excellent) first LP almost in every aspect, even though they have lost some of their punkiness. They really know what they are doing, and they do it well. Top class post punk.

CRIATURAS – "Espiritu de Libertad" LP (Residue)
Absolutely raging Latino hardcore fucking punk from Austin, TX. Raging, but at the same time melodic, too. That's not an easy task to do, but they do it in ease, it seems. They actually have too many guitar solos for my taste, but Dru Molina's vocals and the excellence of their songs bring it back home and I surrender.

KREMLIN – "Drunk in the Gulag" LP (Bad Vibrations / Beach Impediment)
Nothing new actually, something from DISCHARGE, something from NEGATIVE APPROACH, but I simply cannot stop playing this record. In some odd way these Canadians manage to make something fresh out of some old bits and pieces. It sounds so familiar and yet there are some unexpected pieces thrown in here and there, which helps to keep my interest on. Too bad they already broke up. So unfair.

KUUDES SILMÄ – LP (Combat Rock Industry)
One more post-punk record on my top ten list. This album has really grown on me. One of the best Finnish post-punk albums ever. It's dark, but yet so pleasantly punk. Besides, after seeing KUUDES SILMÄ a few times live, I've been getting more and more into this band. One of my current favorite bands for sure.

DHK – "La Krudeza No Muere" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Yes, it's simple. And yes, it's punk. Raw punk from Peru. Honest, straightforward and spirited. It turns me on. No need to analyze it further.

SOKEA PISTE – "Välikäsi" LP (Karkia Mistika / Tuska and Ahdistus)
Combining influences from noise-rock, post-punk, and hardcore punk just to name a few—and doing it in a delicate way. These guys are really into what they are doing, and you can hear it on their records and see it at their shows. I respect this band a lot.

BUBBLING UNDER:

WASTED – "Here Comes the Darkness" LP (Combat Rock Industry / Klownhouse / Trujaca Fala)
The good old WASTED made a record that reaches the level of their earlier albums. Street punk with WASTED's trademark, irresistible sing-a-long choruses. A terrific slab of vinyl.

V/A – "Hardcore '013" 2xLP (Kämäset Levyt / Roku)
22 bands and 47 songs of contemporary Finnish hardcore punk. There are so many good bands in Finland at this very moment that it would have been easy to make this a four LP box and it would still had been a quality compilation.

ACCIDENTE – LP (Blondes Must Die / In My Heart Empire / La Agonía De Vivir / Veganismo Es Respeto / Walking Is Still Honest)
Originally released as CD already in 2011, and the vinyl version *finally* came out this year. And oh boy, how much I have listened to this record. Some of the best melodic punk ever made—and with beautiful female vocals. Every fucking song is a hit.

INFINITE VOID – LP (Contraszt!)
This album came out in Australia already in 2012, but I didn't get it until the Euro press came out this year. Beautiful post-punk from Melbourne.

BEYOND PINK – "Pride and Prejudice" LP (Emancypunx)
This one came also out already in 2012, but I was a bit slow and did not get it until 2013, if I remember right. Anyway, it has been one of the records I have listened to the most this year. Hardcore and punk, anger and melodies. I like their attitude too.

LAS OTRAS – "Devolver El Golpe" 12" (Discos Sense Nom)
Not as great as their 7", but still pretty damn good punk rock.

SICKOIDS – "No Home" 12" (Grave Mistake / Sorry State)
Almost flawless hardcore punk, which brings ARTICLES OF FAITH to my mind.

EPs AND SINGLES:

MAAILMANLOPPU – "Musta Ovi" EP (Kämäset Levyt)
After their LP, which was on my top 10 list of 2012, MAAILMANLOPPU put out this terrific single. This time, instead of fast HC, it's more in the post punk vein. Both songs rule, so it's no wonder this has been one of my biggest favorite 7"s this year.

GAS RAG – "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment)
Shotgun blasts of primitive, raw, brutal, ugly hardcore. No frills, no bullshit, just six loud tracks to prove wrong anyone who claims that punk of today is mellow and calculated.

BORN WRONG – EP (Schizophrenic)
One of the best hardcore 7"s this year, in my opinion. Almost brings the first TALK IS POISON 7" in my mind, which is a huge compliment. Sounds pissed off, just the way it should be.

SKIZOPHRENIA / VAASKA – split EP (540 / Todo Destruido)
I love VAASKA. I love SKIZOPHRENIA. It may be true that both of these bands have released better material than these songs, but I love this split anyway.

JUGGLING JUGULARS – "Asylum" EP (Kämäset Levyt)
JUGGLING JUGULARS started already in 1989, but they are still going strong and this 7" proves it well. Melodic hardcore punk, or melodic punk with a hardcore edge and nods towards anarchopunk. Emotion included. And they also know damn well how to write songs. What else could you possibly demand of a terrific punk EP?

INSTITUTION – "Världens Ändstation" EP (D-Takt / Råpunk)
Excellent Swedish D-beat with members from TOTALITÄR. Meanwhile, HERÄTYS, KVOTERINGEN... Did I already mention TOTALITÄR? Because that's pretty close to what they sound like. You cannot go wrong with that.

PERDITION – "Martial Law" EP (Hardcore Survives)
Another band that shouldn't have broken up yet. I wouldn't like to put them in the noise-core box, but sure they are noisy. And yet there's more than that. Raw punk with influences taken from the best parts of noisy hardcore. I enjoy it a lot.

NEMESIS – "Gyou-shou" EP (Flower of Carnage / Ratbone / Solar Funeral)
Finally the long-awaited second 7" from NEMESIS. Raw and ripping Japanese hardcore. So fucking good! Their first EP (*Dou-Koku*, 2011) was a ripper, and so is this.

REPLICA – EP (Prank)
It took some time until this 7" won me over, but its ugliness and in-your-face punk attitude did the job and now I'm really waiting forward to their next ones. Their demo EP is possibly even better than this, but I'm picking this up anyway.

ARMLESS CHILDREN / YDINASEETON POHJOLA – split EP (Nightstick Justice)
ARMLESS CHILDREN: noisy, distorted D-beat/raw punk/noise-core/whatever. They will possibly never be able to capture their live insanity on record, but their part on this split gives at least some kind of hint at what they are about. Sounds like a small tornado passing overhead. YDINASEETON POHJOLA: more noise and plenty of distortion, and a splendid the COMES cover. Some of their best material thus far on this split, in my opinion.

BUBBLING UNDER:

KYLMÄ SOTA / RAJOITUS – split EP (Svart)
I have to say that the KYLMÄ SOTA side is definitely my favorite side of this split, so I have played it about 20 times more than the RAJOITUS side, which is clearly weaker. Too bad—if this had been a KYLMÄ SOTA 7", it most probably would have been on my Top 10 list.

EFFLUXUS / INFERNÖH – split EP (Rust and Machine)
Two great bands on the same split EP. I wanted to put this on my list, but there simply was not room left anymore. Gosh.

GREG HARVESTER

This year sucked. These records made it better.

LP's and 12"s:

IRON LUNG – "White Glove Test" 2xLP (Iron Lung)
This record is a fucking beast. The first LP is just downright brutal and the second LP is an album-length industrial noise track that is creepy as fuck. Both records are meant to be played together simultaneously and that's where the whole thing becomes fucking mind-blowing. IRON LUNG has really outdone themselves with this record. I listen to it on headphones while walking through my neighborhood and it makes me wanna throw posers through windows. Plus, the LP art is outstanding.

DARK RIDES – "Walk the Floors" LP (Do Ya Hear We)
Every year, I get more and more bored with the quality of melodic, poppy punk that is coming out, but then a record like this one comes along and I'm sold once again. With members who have been in bands like JACK PALANCE BAND, TULSA, FUTURE VIRGINS, FORCED VENGEANCE and HIDDEN SPOTS, it's really hard to go wrong. *Walk the Floors* is crammed with hooks blasting out of every song. The split female/male vocals are soaring throughout the entire record. The whole thing is just fucking perfect.

WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? – 12" (Total Fucker)
I'm still torn if this is the dumbest record of the year or the smartest. I'm usually not a fan of dumb, glue-sniffing punk *at all*, but this record is fucking stupidly flawless. WKSJ? plays simple, ultra-catchy, three chord pogo-punk and lays down the law for punks everywhere. Lines like "I stud my fucking glue bag" and "Don't let them tell you how to dress, let me tell you how to dress. Wear studs" are now immortal to me. So, stop thinking that it's punk to look like a sexy lumberjack with a rattail and stud your face. Plus, their singer is a UFO investigator, a cryptozoologist and an expert on pre-Colonial Native American habitation in Massachusetts. Mindfuck…

THE LOVE TRIANGLE – "Clever, Clever" LP (Sorry State / Static Shock)
My friend, Doug clued me into this LP pretty late in the year and I haven't been able to get the fucking thing out of my head. This band's EPs are really good, but this LP is phenomenal. Catchy, poppy songs with quick 4/4 drumming and a clean, chunky guitar that is equal parts MINUTEMEN tone and not giving a fuck. The album flows perfectly and repeated listens are mandatory. "Hollywood Sleaze" has been stuck in my head for a month straight with no signs of leaving anytime soon.

NO STATIK – "Unity and Fragmentation" LP (Iron Lung)
As always, NO STATIK kills it, both live and on vinyl. Their usual side-long song was a lot less weird than their past efforts, but still more "out there" than most other hardcore bands. The other songs on the record are just brutal and blazing. There are no other bands like NO STATIK and I love them so much. I'm excited about everything they've done and I look forward to everything they have to offer in the future

THE BODY – "Christs, Redeemers" 2x12" (Thrill Jockey)
2013 really sucked for me and I told a friend that the BODY is the only band that understands how awful I feel; how much I hate many of the things around me. This record sounds like isolation, pain, confusion and hate, but is still starkly beautiful and breathtaking at the same time. It sounds like what I would imagine the whole world falling apart would sound like. Perfect.

WHORE PAINT – "Swallow My Bones" LP (Load)
I think the thing I like most about this record is that every member of WHORE PAINT is just a bona fide shredder. I don't even really know how to describe them besides their own self-description of riff rock/no wave/crooner shred hybrid. Their LP is excellent and seeing these three ladies (who are all older than the typical punk age) destroy a Providence warehouse with an audience of wildly dancing teens and twenty-somethings made me wanna cry in the best way.

TONY MOLINA – "Dissed and Dismissed" 12" (Melters)
On his debut record, Tony takes all the best elements of super catchy, blown out guitar rock and condenses it down to tidy, minute long jammers. No bullshit. No filler. Simply, this record makes me really fucking happy.

LAS OTRAS – "Devolver el Golpe" 12" (Discos Sense Nom)
Seeing these four women come from Spain to San Francisco and simply destroy made me so fucking happy. This record made me even happier. Fiercely feminist, unapologetic, energetic and ragged punk. I love it.

NATURE BOYS – LP (San Huevos)
I love NATURE BOYS because they play raw punk rock that falls somewhere in that mysterious realm that DEAD MOON also inhabits. Part straightforward punk and part stripped down rock n roll. I love this LP just as much as their last one… if not more.

EPs:

FUNERAL CONE – "Peel Back the Foil" EP (100% Breakfast / Trotz Allem)
The best, noisy, most fun, manic party punk EP of the year…. with hooks to back it up. Every time I listen to this, I want to see them playing live and flicking their sweat on me. I'm waiting impatiently for everything else this band will ever have to offer.

FROZEN TEENS – "Oakland/Footsteps" (Starcleaner)
These Minneapolis dudes continue to put out nothing but solid gold. These two songs are perfect melodic punk with so many layers that something new pops out with each listen. "Footsteps" has been firmly planted in my head for the better part of this year and I can't wait for new recordings to surface.

REPLICA – "Strings" EP (Prank)
REPLICA is awesome because they sound like a bad mood on fire. They're making some of the best, most engaging, most enraging and genuine hardcore in the Bay Area right now and I feel lucky to be around to see them. Best people. Best band.

FULL SUN – "Stay Awake" EP (Let's Pretend)
Jeff Grant continues moving forward with his home recording project and continues to put out piles of insanely catchy power-poppy punk songs. His music occupies that same brain space of the MARKED MEN (or side projects), but less anxious and he gives his songs room to breathe. This one took a minute to grow on me, but when it did, I realized its genius and realized it would be stuck in my head for a long, long time.

NEEDLES – "Desesperacion" EP (Iron Lung)
This one is kind of a no brainer. Martin's voice has been following me through my love affair with hardcore since my teenage years and the other members of this band have spent time in more great bands than you will ever be in. NEEDLES is fucking fierce as shit, committed to DIY and exactly what I want out of hardcore. This record is perfect.

RADIOACTIVITY – "Back to Me" EP (Alien Snatch)
I shouldn't really have to say anything more than "This is songs by Jeff Burke from the MARKED MEN". The most brilliantly perfect, precise and wonderful melodic punk that you'll ever hope to find.

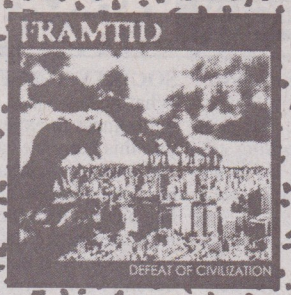
COPYCATS – "Miss the Strange" EP (Antiguays)
This band sent a demo in to *MRR* a few years ago and their songs have been stuck in my head ever since. They're a little like Spain's answer to FROZEN TEENS, but they have their own voice as well. Gritty, guitar-driven, ramshackle punk that will stick in your head for years. Four perfect songs.

SWIFTUMZ – "Willy/Can We Get Together" (Divis & Mason / Sugar Mountain)
This record was mailed directly to me and I have no idea why, but I'm glad it was. Amidst a sea of posers, SWIFTUMZ plays beautifully executed, dreamy sounding, guitar-driven indie-pop that rises above the crap. These two songs are flawless.

THE NOVICE – "What You Want/Your Crime" (Dirtnap)
See the entry for RADIOACTIVITY.

COLD CIRCUITS – "Remote User" EP (Erste Theke Tonträger)
This EP takes elements of post-punk and that ever-present dark punk shit and slaps 'em together to make some truly memorable shit. I want more.

TAPES (IN FIVE WORDS OR LESS):
RATS REST – Best tape of the year.
TIMES BEACH – Perfect indie-punk.
FINAL FRONTIERS – Perfect pop about bullshit boulevards.
NEGATION – Post-punk, no wave brilliance.
TRAUMA HARNESS – Halloween tape – Spooky punk without being hokey.
CAL AND THE CALORIES – Slimy punk rock with attitude.
PUPPY VS DYSLEXIA – BOREDOMS worship done right.
HOUNDED WOUNDS / MUTANT VIDEO – The sounds inside my brain.
BLACK PANTIES – Just one big bad mood.
NO STATIK – Remix tape – The perfect hardcore band.



ANDREW UNDERWOOD

For me at least, 2013 was definitely a year of "out with the old, in with the new", so I suppose it's very appropriate that my best of list for this year primarily features new(-ish) young(-ish) bands.

RECONSIDERATION – "1st Demo" demo tape (self-released)
Just as the noise punk trend seemed to be sputtering out worldwide, RECONSIDERATION dropped one of the absolute best GAI/SWANKS-inspired recordings in ages, maybe the best since PEOPLE's *Fairy Tale* demo. UK82 (complete with CHAOS UK cover) by way of Kyushu '83, played with enormous energy and a palpable sense of fun that most bands in the style sorely lack. Being limited to a scant 100 copies means that this recording won't get the attention it deserves, so I hope their next effort is A: more widely distributed and B: just as good as this fucker!

ABSOLUT – "Absolut" (Cut the Cord That…) + "Insane Power" (Sub/Par) demo tapes
Not much to say about these recordings, the quality speaks for itself. These Toronto maniacs put almost every other D-beat band on Earth to shame this year, dropping two demos with not a bad song between them, over the top reverb-from-hell vocals and some of the most blazing and inventive guitar work since Bones was in his prime. From what I've heard the upcoming 12" is as good or better than this stuff!

MAQUENA MUERTA – "Maquina De Muerte" EP (Metadona)
Bleak, desperate sounding Scandi-style hardcore stripped down to its bare bones and left howling in the dirt. An absolute tour-de-force, from the songwriting to the performance, to the recording. This is 2013's spiritual successor to *Victims of a Bomb Raid*, chilling and hopeless and impossible to ignore.

SAD BOYS – "Frolic!" EP (Toxic State) + "Cry Now, Cry Later" EP (Pogo and Cry)
Despite the ridiculous cost of living and the relentless gentrification and the constant stripping away of the city's core identity (I can't fucking believe that the Gray's Papaya in the Village closed!), New York City continues to produce amazing punk bands, and I think that pound-for-pound SAD BOYS may be the best of the lot. Their style is a throwback to Manhattan in the early '90s, when junkies still roamed the Lower East Side, squatters were still battling City Hall, between ABC No Rio, CBGBs and Coney Island High you could pogo your brains out all weekend long, and the *Benefit for Beer* comp was the definitive statement of the NYC punk scene. It takes real skill to write songs this memorable and catchy with such a limited palette, and it takes a real New York band to capture such powerful nostalgia in both sound and lyric. Of course, another great strength of SAD BOYS is the darkness that lies ever present beneath the chipper veneer of what seem like brainless pogo tunes, as the lyrics so brilliantly capture the depression, alienation and frustration of living the loser life in a city of winners.

SOLPÄÄTOS – "Sinä Ja Minä" EP (Wesuck) + V/A – "Raw Punkz" EP (Vox Populi)
I gotta cheat here and put in a twofer, nominally because the comp was my introduction to SOLPÄÄTOS, but mostly because both records are great and I only have so many spaces in a top ten. The *Raw Punkz* comp is just another illustration of the general supremacy of compilations that include grade-A material from all participating parties instead of covers and live tracks and other scraps from the studio floor. All five bands (RAW DISTRACTIONS, PERSEVERE, SOLPÄÄTOS, VENDETTA and SKIZOPHRENIA) are great, but the real standouts were PERSEVERE's very last track (RIP), a flawless Riot City-style ripper and of course SOLPÄÄTOS' bouncy Finnish-inspired punk attack. The full EP contains four more songs of equal quality, total LAMA/RATSIA-inspired melodic punk with the speed and rough edges of hardcore.

TOM AND BOOT BOYS – "Stupid and Naked Punks Are Running In My House" EP (Pogo 77)
One of the most pleasant surprises of last year was the re-emergence of both TOM AND BOOT BOYS as a recording band and Pogo 77 Records (both the projects of the indomitable and usually drunk and naked Nori). Both have been operating sporadically through the '00s, but this record (and the huge and heartbreakingly amazing three day Pogo 77 fest!) announced a full return to form, featuring six hilarious and thoroughly pogo-able anthems to stir the heart of the drunken fuckup inside all of us. 1-2 drums, whistle-able melodies, and slurred vocals abound—all of it chaotic and sincerely tongue-in-cheek. "I am OK, you are fucker".

D.H.K. – "La Krudeza No Muere" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I have been hyped on DESTRUYE Y HUYE, KREA since the first cassette, and while I loved the EP I approached this album with a bit of trepidation. Would they live up to the incredibly high standard of the earlier stuff? Little did I know that they would not only meet those standards, they would easily surpass them. This is an incredible work of hardcore fury, fueled by rage against the state, the pigs and injustice with such driving fire that it's difficult not to pick up a brick and get to smashing the state as soon as needle hits vinyl. There are loving nods to classic Spanish and South American hardcore bands alongside the DISCHARGE influence, but this record is no retro joke, it's a milestone of contemporary piss-raw hardcore punk.

EXIT HIPPIES / LOTUS FUCKER – split LP (SPHC)
Holy shit, I feel like this record has been years in the making, mostly because of how much I was anticipating it. No disappointments here. EXIT HIPPIES' side is a frenetic mulch of spastic SORE THROAT riffs and unholy yowling, structure growing more and more rickety as the side stretches on until it collapses in a pile of feedback and techno music. This is definitely my favorite material by them in a while, and if you like this you owe it to yourself to check out EXIT HIPPIES side band FILTH MILITIA, whose 2013 demo nearly snagged a spot in this list as well. LOTUS FUCKER has been a staple of my Year End Top Tens since the very first one I did, and they've just gotten better and better over time. This side is up to their usual standard of excellence: punchy, always driving and, like Tai Chi, simultaneously hard and soft (as befitting a band that can be influenced by both GAUZE and RITES OF SPRING). Brilliant stuff all around and the amazing art on the EXIT HIPPIES side my push it into all-time classic territory.

LIFE – "Violence, Peace and Peace Research" LP (Punk Bastard)
Unlike some of the records on this list that I had been hotly anticipating, the first LIFE recording since 2009 (and the first full-length in over a decade) appeared with very little fanfare. Crust enthusiasts everywhere swarmed on the first pressing, fortunately the band has already issued a second press for those who missed out. Having passed the 20 year mark, LIFE are elder statesmen of the Japanese crust scene, but the band as showcased on this album exhibit no signs of slowing down any time soon. Furious tracks blur by with little to no breathing room in between, dominated by one of the most ferocious vocals in all of hardcore and featuring what will probably always be the definitive cover of DISCLOSE's "Conquest".

V/A – "Ground Zero NYC 2013" LP (Always Restrictions / Toxic State)
It almost seems silly to include a record that was so universally praised from a scene and label that were so universally praised in 2013, but goddamnit this is easily the best American compilation of the '00s and stands up to anything else released this year on the merit of both its standout tracks and the record as a whole. Perhaps most impressively, this album manages to sound cohesive even though the contents range from spooky goth-punk to raging D-beat to whatever the fuck mutant weirdness. Personally I enjoyed the tracks from LA MISMA, SAD BOYS, PERDITION, DEFORMITY and BLACK BOOT the most, but everything here is good to great.

MARTIN SORRENDEGUY

Punk is still pumping some hot shit out of its endless, gaping hole. There have been some great releases this year and a lot of good ones as well. But, my friends, this list is about greatness, according to me. This time around I created two lists, the new addition being live sets that made a mark on me. Here we go.

RECORDS:

GAS RAG – "Human Rights" EP (Beach Impediment) + "6 Track" EP (Even Worse)
These Chicago sex punk hoes have shelled out two stompers this year. Raging tunes packed onto two EPs. Completely killer Scandi hardcore meets…oh, let's say POISON IDEA just for fun, so what does that sound like to you? Oh wait! Take a wiff of these poppers, what does it sound like now?

INSTITUTION – "Domen Är Satt" LP (De:Nihil / Havoc)
Vocals are so fucking savage on the record and of course the playing is flawless power. Scandi-vets know what they are doing and aren't here to fuck around. With members of TOTALITÄR and HERÄTYS what would you expect? Great shit!

DIE –"Life Is Hate" EP (Sonic Terror)
This band sounds like they eat, sweat and shit hardcore. Straight-up stomping intros and moments that pound through your skull and reside permanently in the brain. Don't know much about this band but they've put out a well crafted and executed record.

GLAM – "Veneno En Sus Flechas" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
Demonios salvajes!!!!! Fuck you! And *fuck me too*! This is crushing! This band pounds the shit out of me with every listen. Nothing can get in the way of the power behind this release. Every element of sound and production are wed in such a way that evokes a response that moves miles away from "Oh, that's cool." Cool? This is what addiction sounds like. The moment the needle drops my lungs expand, muscles tense, a crazed look comes over my face. So fucking hooked.

RAKTA – 12" (Dama Da Noite / Nada Nada)
This LP squeezed its way onto my list being released just weeks ago and in such a short time I knew it was amazing. RAKTA hails from Brazil and seemed to have summoned spirits using their blend of witch-induced punk/goth damage. It has elements of *Fetisch*-era XMAL DEUTSCHLAND slapped over a heavier, thicker sound. This record will be on rotation for years to come. Amazing!

SOCIETY NURSE – 12" (Iron Lung)
What makes bands stand out from the pack is their willingness to experiment and infuse new elements into this thing we call punk. It is the risk-taking that can produce an amazing piece. SOCIEITY NURSE has done just that, bringing the brutal hardcore sound but having it drenched in noise and experimental off-timed bits. This is an intriguing listen and with every spin I notice something that I had missed before, I love surprises. Great!

CREMALLERAS – LP (Cintas Pepe)
How does a two-piece band manage to sound so good? This is an excellent *punk* record. Raw sounds caked with tons of a snotty ass attitude. Many bands try so hard to do this and fail miserably. CREMALLERAS from Monterrey, Mexico nail this shit. Completely killer, enough said!

NOMAD – LP (Toxic State)
Relentless, rapid-fire insanity out of NY-fucking-C. NOMAD is doing this right. I feel the hurt in my body only imagining what seeing them live would be like at 538 Johnson, complete mayhem punk insanity leaving me spent and bruised. Tye's vocals are what pushers this record into an untouchable zone.

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE – "Observant Com el Mon es Destrueix" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)
I was very conflicted with this record making the list. It is amazing but even the best things may be slightly flawed. I will just come out and say it, I cannot stand the song called "Vaixells Oblidats." Aside from wanting to jump over to the turntable to skip the track every time I get to it, this platter is a monster of a hardcore record. I have played this a ton since its release and never fails in getting my blood boiling.

Honorable Mentions: PERMANENT RUIN, SEX DWARF, GAG 12", GREEN BERET

LIVE SETS:

1. S.H.I.T. After-Party Set at Not Dead Yet Fest, Toronto
Every time I see this band, I leave the show saying that was great! Never disappoint me one bit.

2. NUDES at El Rio, San Francisco
A poorly attended night for this Olympia band and shame on all of you who missed it. I was in a trance over what I was witnessing, elements of CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS. At one point I was overcome with fear and nervousness during this band's set. I need more!

3. DAWN OF HUMANS at the Mousetrap, Chicago
Fuck, what can I say? Fresh approach to their set, it included nudity, dirt, tape, trees, masks, excellent punk music, and more nudity from a few people in the crowd. The stuff one looks back on and thinks, "What the hell?"

4. GAG at the Oakland Metro
Explosive!!! Every show I see by this band results in them going nuts, the crowd going nuts, all hell seems to break loose. I occasionally run in crazily and take a few photos amidst the chaos.

5. INFEST at Chi-Town Futbol, Chicago
Man, this band brought their intensity to the Midwest for the first time ever and it was wonderful. Songs we all know delivered with sharpness and intensity. INFEST and those who love them made this show unforgettable.

6. FRAMTID at Mohawk Club, Austin
When the singer of FRAMTID put his fingers up in the air making a peace sign and backing him was that wall of chaotic crust sound that engulfed all who attended, we were left speechless and we believed in FRAMTID.

7. GAS RAG at Wrong Bar, Not Dead Yet, Toronto
I put my fucking camera away for this shit, and completely fucked up my hand. Did I care? No. It's been two months since then and my hand is still fucked up, do I care now? Uhhhh, a bit. Do I regret it? Hell no! Completely killer!

8. ANASAZI at The Fortress, San Francisco
Oh, what a wonderful mess this band is. Raw energy with an insane death/punk sound. This band channels some 45 GRAVE with a splash of Rozz (CHRISTIAN DEATH) in the mix. They came off as enjoying what they do and not giving a fuck. That was the sense I got from this unique NY band. *Great!*

9. GRIMA at 7th St. Warehouse, Los Angeles
Some crazy-ass punk put out that night by these fierce young women. Watching other girls and some boys go nuts for this band got me pumped up as well. Totally LA, totally fun, and totally worth checking out.

10. TOTAL CONTROL at Holy Mountain, Chaos en Tejas, Austin
Watching this band in a room full of mostly punks is tops. Great set, great songs and a hell of a lot of dancing. The absolute best!

MITCH CARDWELL

LIFE STINKS – LP (S/S)
A cocktail of frustration, anger and depression, but an album that's oddly inspiring in its flawless execution. Easily the best album of the year.

SECTOR ZERO – "Guitar Attack/Hiding in My Car" (Goner)
These are utterly past-it sounds, energized by the possibility of danger and the wonderment of rudimentary riffing. A work of genius.

OOGA BOOGAS – LP (Aarght!)
Few bands are patient enough to catch a groove, lean on it and ride it straight into your gray matter mush. It's called finesse and the OOGAS have it. The dripping disco sleaze found on "Sex in the Chillzone" is a must-hear.

XL-FITS – "Cowboy/Colpo Grosso" EP (Sid Vicious)
It's as if the DEFEX were reborn in Japan, 2013. You'll never a find a copy.

RÄJÄYTTÄJÄT– "Räjäyttäjä" LP (Dead Beat) + "Awopbopaloopop Alopbam Räjä" LP (Räjä)
I'm drunk on Räjä!: A three-man circus of alcoholism, HURRIGANES worship and dick-swinging, laid sweaty and bare across a pair LPs so fuzzily fucked that even I get winded spinning 'em. Please come to the US.

BLACK AND WHITE – "We Like Noise/No Reply" (Hardcore Survives)
Take the classic, compact itchy-guitar power of REGISTRATORS, add some spiky punk moves to the mix and serve boiling hot. High hopes for more vinyl in 2014.

TRUE SONS OF THUNDER – "Stop and Smell Your Face" LP (Little Big Chief)
If I Paypal'd this band $35, do you think they'd write and record a sixteen-minute mini-opera about using Skoal Bandits as suppositories? I think they might.

HUMAN EYE – "4: Into Unknown" LP (Goner)
My head caves in at the very thought of this band. Too good. They get further out with each go-around, but never miss the mark.

BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS – "Holodeck Survivor/ Not Getting Stabbed" (Total Punk)
And the split with LEGENDARY WINGS. And the split with GIORGIO MURDERER. And the LP.

HOT LUNCH – LP (Who Can You Trust?)
Heavy, thuggy rock done quite right. The sort of thing that really shouldn't work too well with a current band, but they beat the odds.

ALSO KILLER:
The C-3'S debut 45 on Overthrow… Two great singles from the RAYDIOS… COUNTER INTUITS *Sheets of Hits* LP on Pyramid Scheme… *Demo* EP by SUN CHILDREN SUN on More Noize/SPHC… Two great singles by SWIFTUMZ… OBLIVIANS *Desperation* LP on In the Red…The *It's All Panic* EP comp on IAP…

RAY SUBURBIA

TOTAL TRASH – "You Don't Try" demo (self-released)
Minneapolis does it again. First off, this isn't really a demo—this is a legit cassette release. The songs are well recorded, and the whole thing has a polished (not in a slick way, but in the sense that this band knew exactly what they were going for when they put this together) feel to it. That being said, this cassette fucking rules. This is hardcore made by the generation of kids who's parents very well could have been in first wave hardcore bands; people growing up in a world where the BLACK FLAG bars are the dad-rock cultural equivalent to the ROLLING STONES' lips. You'd think everything that could be done with '80s influenced punk/hardcore would already have been done. But every song here has the genuine piss and frustration of early hardcore, but the distance in time allowing them to add the best elements of the post-hardcore/college rock/post-Nirvana era's of American independent music to the mix-creating something completely new, but still familiar. Add to all of that Jessica's snotty, rage-filled vocals, and you have a perfect fucking release—she's pretty much my favorite female singer in punk right now. The bonus of a wicked cover of the GERMS' "Communist Eyes" pretty much makes it a perfect. The tape is sold out, but you can download the tracks off their bandcamp at a name your price rate. It's just a bummer that you won't get the added feel that the artwork gives to the music. Dustin's drugged out, post-Juggalo, Nick Toons-damaged art just gives an extra flavor to this band's total aesthetic. Honestly, if I could get away with it, three of my top ten releases of the year would be the songs "Far Out," "Know," and the *goddamn amazing* "Rich Grrl."

AUSMUTEANTS – LP (Aarght!)
So the way records are assigned to reviewers at *MRR* is that the coordinators, along with occasional additional helpers, pick a morning/afternoon where we're free and sit down and listen to *every single record* that was mailed to us that month. Obviously it'd be impossible to listen to all of them all the way through so we listen to snatches of a record in order to figure out whether or not it falls into the criteria for being reviewed by us, and if so, to whom it would be best to assign. There's a lot of music to get to, and honestly, there just isn't the time to sit and hang out with a record that somewhat interests you and see if you really like it. This last month Layla plopped this LP on the turntable, and about fifteen seconds into the twenty seconds I heard of "Bad Day" I already knew it was one of the best punk songs I ever heard. Yes. *Ever.* If this song came out on as a single, it would have made my top ten. Thank god the rest of the record held up! This is super tight, synth heavy, snotty punk. Music to goon around your bedroom all alone like a weirdo, to pogo on your friends drunkenly at 3 AM in the living room, or to drown out the din of this shitty planet when riding the bus or walking down the street. The obvious/lazy comparisons would be the SCREAMERS and DEVO, but there's also the buzzsaw compacted pop of the MARKED MEN or the FM KNIVES in there. Someone in the US *really* needs to put this out so's not to have to get it shipped all the way from Australia. Fuck, I think I'm gonna go play it again right now...

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – "Call of Death" LP (Feral Ward)
en a regularly functioning band for a bit now, so to see a new long player appear was just about shocking. I don't even have to talk about this album as much as the band because these fellas and lady are the real fucking deal. To consistently write songs that are so catchy that you swear you've heard them on mixtapes since you were first getting into punk takes something that English doesn't have a word for; a word that describes something beyond mere talent. You could slip these songs in between any "classic" punk tracks, from any era, and you would never know the difference. A record like this, by a band like this, makes you realize how timeless and eternal the excitement of punk is. If I knew CRIMINAL DAMAGE were going to release a new record every year, I'd only have to struggle to come up with a year end top nine from here on out.

BERNAY'S PROPAGANDA – "Zabraneta Planeta" LP (Moonlee / Napravi Zaedno / MKC Skopje / Pruegelprinz)
These folks have been one of my favorite bands for the past few years and I got scared there for a minute cause last year all they put out was a pretty mediocre remix EP (usually a cheap and lazy effort, if you ask me) and wondered what was going on with them. Looks like they were just biding time to put together an amazing album of post-punky/new wave-ish dance-punk. *Zabraneta Planeta* keeps the angular and disjointed guitars, funky bass lines and tight drumming that the band made their name with, but explores some more post-hardcore/math-rock and melodic themes. It's really cool to see a band genuinely evolve and expand their sound without it coming off like a conscious shift in style. Kristina's shout-sung political lyrics are great as always - making revolution sound sexy as fuck. Yeah, they're mostly in the band's native language of Macedonian, but there are some in English for us more ignorant punks. Maybe I'm biased because it's one of the two songs in English on the album, but to me "A Bone to the Dog" sticks out as the perfect song to fill the living room dance floor at any post-show dance party. Revolutionary politics set to a relentless ass-shaking dance beat, how can you not love it?

RAKTA – 12" (Dana de Noite / Nada Nada)
When this record showed up at the compound it went straight on the turntable and pretty much stayed there. While I'm generally not one to swoon over packaging and things like that, I was really into the aesthetic presentation of this record. One edition came in a beautiful screened, sewn, cloth sleeve that gave the feel of holding some kind of forbidden artifact. Inside came a piece of cedar specifically meant to be burnt while listening to the record. It's one thing for a band to want to create an otherworldly atmosphere for a live performance, it's something else completely to do that for the listener at home. All that just adds to the swirling, atmospheric witchy feel of the music. This album has all my favorite elements of the recent wave of goth-punk (effected bass tones, female vocals, the shuddering bleakness of staring into The Void), but adds a sensation of genuine transcendence to the music. The best parts of ARCTIC FLOWERS, MORAL HEX, and even SUBTONIX—but adding a psyched out and dreamy JESUS AND MARY CHAIN openness. Some tracks make me feel as though I'm listening to some kind of esoteric sacred music-like I walked through a door and found myself standing at the back of the room during the middle of a secret, long suppressed religious ritual. Being that I don't speak Portuguese I have no idea what the lyrics are actually about, but the vocals take me to a place where that doesn't matter anyway. It may be lame to put a record that came out in mid-December on a year end Top Ten, but this all female Brazilian bruxa-wave record is continually sending shivers up and down my spine.

SUCKED DRY – "Dog Children" LP (Muckracker / Not Normal Tapes)
Somehow in the 31 years I lived in the Midwest I never once went to Kansas City. Just never got around to it. Now that I live in California, I'm kinda pissed at myself for missing out. SUCKED DRY, while now partially located in Chicago, put out the best hardcore LP of the year and I didn't even know who they were until a month before I moved. Hardcore is over 30 years old now, and it's getting harder and harder to do new things within the genre's tropes without just going full FUCKED UP and making an art-punk record and just calling it "hardcore." "Dog Children" plays within the confines of the style, but doesn't mine the past for ideas and riffs. The outsider frustration that oozes out of this recording reminds you that there was a reason hardcore happened and that there's still a reason for it in 2013. The elements of late '80s/early '90s noise-rock and pigfuck just cement the anger and peculiar insanity that comes from living in a mid-sized city in the Midwest. This record is exactly like the guy standing at the back of the pit with his arms crossed just *seething*. It's a constant threat of violence that could be directed anywhere, at anytime, and you just have to hope it's not at you.

NORTH KOREA 666 – demo (self-released)
What the fuck is this?! There's some kind of crazy Jim Colao-era NAKED RAYGUN type tribal drumming going on with a raw sheet of guitar noise raining down hard. The vocalist sounds like she's completely insane and *really* fucking pissed off about it. Maybe like a more spastic NO BABIES? Or perhaps a more unhinged KRUNCHIES or BLATZ? There's almost no melody, but the rhythms are so complex and heavy that it doesn't even matter. It's arty without trying to be. I bet you if you asked the members of this band individually what they thought they sound like you'd probably get four wildly different responses. The tracks "I See You Every Day" and "Green Arms" have the most dreadful tension-the kind usually reserved for those moments when fight-or-flight kicks in. I've been listening to this a whole bunch trying to figure just what hell is happening—the more I listen the more brain leaks out my nose. Music made in rural, middle of nowhere, southern Illinois that could never come from anywhere else. I honestly can't think of any other specific band that NORTH KOREA 666 sounds remotely like—and that says a lot. True weirdo punk at it's finest.

SPECTRES – "Nothing to Nowhere" LP (Deranged)
So many bands doing the whole dark-punk thing sound so incredibly affected and contrived - part-time Goths. And while this didn't strike me as immediately as their first LP, *Last Days*, I've found myself listening to it more and more. With this album SPECTRES shows it doesn't have to act like the guy peacocking at Goth Night trying to prove how dark he is. Tracks like "Remote Viewing," "Nothing to Nowhere," and "Missing Time" - with it's incredibly tasteful use of synth—prove that these guys are really light years ahead of most bands in this style when it comes to songwriting and arranging. Every bass line, vocal melody and guitar part is in complete service to the song. This album toes that fine like between post-punk and the more dreamy/icy 4AD style indie (just check the amazing CHAMELEONS-esque guitar riff at the end of "Decompensation"). Also, their reference to the creepiest internet created myth, Slender Man, keeps in the tradition started by the gothiest goth cut ever, "Bela Lugosi's Dead," with a decidedly modern cult touch. These guys show that they're not just revivalists as much as traditionalists helping move this style forward. When this whole dark-punk, or whatever, trend winds down and we start looking back for albums that stood up, I'm sure this one will still hold strong.

RADIOACTIVITY – LP + "Back to Me" EP (Dirtnap / Alien Snatch)
Jeff Burke and Mark Ryan are *the musical* team to be reckoned with. Every band they've been in together has been nothing less than phenomenal and these records keep the high standard they've set for themselves. Somehow they managed to make what are pretty much two more MARKED MEN records, without them sounding exactly like the MARKED MEN—I mean, complaining about it sounding too similar would be like suing John Fogerty for sounding too much like CCR. But it's the subtle nuances and differences that make these pretty much the best records either guy has made since the perfect *Fix My Brain*. The signature buzzsaw pop hooks that invoke the BEAT, the BUZZCOCKS, and the ONLY ONES are there, but this time with cooler guitar leads. Not the wanky, noodle-y kind, but the kind that add extra depth and melody. And not that these guys have never been aggressive (the MARKED MEN live beat their instruments harder and more relentlessly than most hardcore bands I've ever seen), but some of the songs here seem a little bit tougher with some boiling under tension and aggression than anything these fellas have done since the REDS. There's occasionally a little more length and rock to the sound too—the tracks "Alone" (from the LP) and "Silent" (from the EP) have an almost WIPERS-esque straight-driving melancholy to them. The LP is the MARKED MEN album I've been waiting for almost a decade. RADIOACTIVITY über alles.

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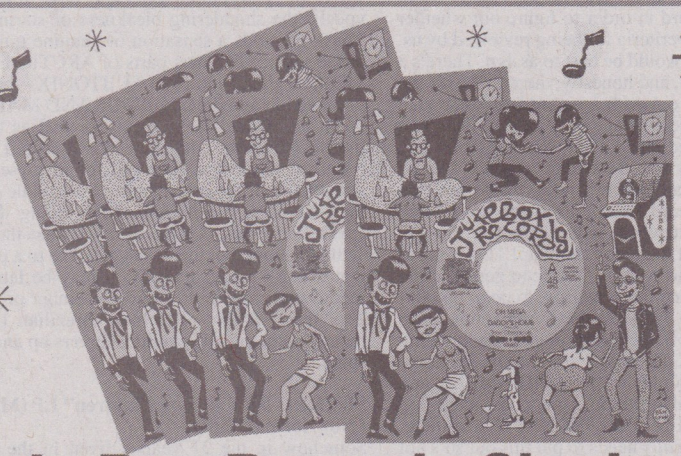

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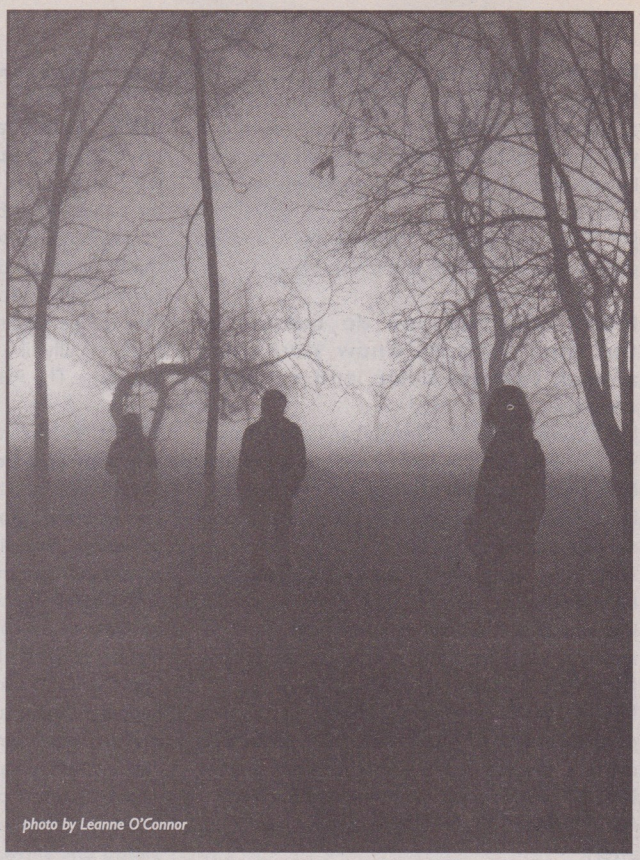

photo by Leanne O'Connor

NERVOSAS

Nervosas is a punk band from Columbus, Ohio. Their sound is haunting, but catchy at the same time. When trying to describe their sound, I think of the Wipers in the best way, but with their own uniqueness. They've been around since 2011 and put out a great LP over the summer. Catch them on their West Coast tour this spring and check out nervosas.bandcamp.com for recordings and more info. This interview was done on New Year's Day in cold and snowy Ohio. Interview by Leanne O'Connor. Photos by Leanne O'Connor, and Amanda Adams.

MRR: First things first, what is your name and what do you play in Nervosas?

Mickey: I play guitar.

Jeff: I play bass and sing.

Nick: I play something… just don't say I'm a drummer.

MRR: If an awkward coworker or your quirky aunt asked what your band sounded like, what would you say?

Jeff: I'll let Nick answer this; he'll have a funnier answer.

Nick: It's fast. That's all I ever say to anyone who doesn't come to shows. It's fast.

Mickey: I say it's punk, like the Ramones. If they look at me weird, I say "Green Day?"

Nick: That's good, you should just run down the line. Start at something you think they might know, so you say Dead Kennedys first and then they go, "what?" Then you just say something more obvious and they go, "what?" Then eventually you say, Elton John, but fast. Or just hard goth, raw pop.

MRR: How did the band start?

Nick: People put their hands on things.
Mickey: I got this shitty RockTek chorus pedal and I was playing with it in your room and thought it sounded kinda cool. Then you came in and started playing bass and then we just started writing songs.
Jeff: Then we showed them to Nick and he played drums on them and it was sweet.

MRR: What do you do outside of the band? I wanna know your spirit animal, favorite color, and celebrity crush!
Jeff: I book shows at a venue/bar. I don't have a spirit animal, but if it had to pick one, it would be a sloth. I like sloths; they are pretty cool. I like sleeping. No, a koala bear! Yeah, aren't they tired and also mean?
Nick: They sleep like 23 hours a day and hide behind shit.
Jeff: Sounds great. I like sloths though. Sloths—maybe a koala bear. My favorite color is black [laughter]. My celebrity crush is Toody.
Mickey: I work a job I don't like and pretty much daydream all day. My spirit animal is probably a cat or a rabbit. A combination of both, a crabbit! My favorite colors are pink and purple.
Nick: Pinkle? You can't have two of every answer!
Mickey: Yes, I can do what I want! I have a lot of celebrity crushes. One I've been thinking about a lot recently is Kiefer Sutherland from *Lost Boys*.
Nick: I polish turds for a living. My spirit animal is Sully from *Monsters Inc.*. My favorite color is like a turquoise with more white in it, it's called Laguna Blue. I love that color, I really love it. They used to make vans out of it, but they don't anymore. My celebrity crush is Jamz Dean from Columbus.

MRR: Talk to me about some bands or records that are the worst. So bad that they influenced you to never sound that way.
Nick: I'm too posi for this. Nervosas don't try all that hard; we just sound like this.
Mickey: I guess the Smiths. I'd never want our band to sound like the Smiths.
Nick: How is that bad? The Smiths are awesome! You don't like it because Johnny Marr is an awesome guitar player and you are totally threatened.
Mickey: I don't feel threatened by awesome guitar players!
Nick: I fucking hate Weezer; so awful.
Mickey: Oh my god yes, I hate Weezer! A lot of bands lately kinda sound like Weezer. These bands that are doing that indie pop sound, I just keep hearing Weezer.
Nick: Everything from that era is awful.
Mickey: It's really funny when we see a band that Nick doesn't like because he's like, "I don't have to listen to this because I had Veruca Salt in the '90s."
Nick: They fucking suck ass, that band is terrible!
Jeff: We don't want to sound like Veruca Salt.

MRR: What are some bands or records that you are currently into?
Jeff: Nature Boys. I really like that Cülo record a lot. *Candy Waves* by Vacation.
Mickey: Wax Idols' *Discipline and Desire*, I think that's a great record. They are a great band. I really like Night Birds' *Born to Die in Suburbia*. The new Iceage record.
Nick: I really like Helm, the new EP Silencer is awesome. The Falcon, and also Crooked Bangs.

MRR: What was the first band you were in and how old were you?
Nick: I was in a band called Lawnchair when I was in eighth grade. Lawnchair was awesome! Lawnchair was like the *one* sorta indie punk rock band that anyone had in my town in '89.
Jeff: When I was in middle school, and this might be hard to believe, but I had a band called the Fighting Lawnchairs. That was my first band.
Nick: Jeff and I are from the same place. This happened miles away from each other, Jeff was just in a way later version.
Mickey: At the same time I started two bands. The first one I played drums in, it was called Swiss Cheese Hooligans. It was a ska band. We played one show, we sucked. Then Ragdoll Radio, which I played bass in. We were an all-girl punk band.

MRR: You tend to pick interesting cover songs to learn and record, like "Beautiful Child" by Fleetwood Mac, "Biting Bullets" by INXS and "Touch the Night" by Neil Young. Do you have a certain system when picking songs? Or are you just picking whatever you are into at the moment without much thought other that?
Jeff: Nick picks them.
Nick: It's mainly picking a fight with the other people in the band. Jeff's like we're covering a Fleetwood Mac song and I'm like were covering an INXS song! It's the only place where anybody gets to be individual in the band. The band makes all of the decisions and yet if you're like, "no, I fucking love this song and were gonna cover it you assholes" that's pretty much how that works.

MRR: Two thirds of the band are skaters. What are some of the best skating spots you've been to on tour?
Nick: The skate park in Bloomington is awesome, also the totally secret ramp in Bloomington. I'd say Bloomington is ground zero for being awesome for skateboarding.
Jeff: Yeah, Bloomington was fun.
Nick: I skated a bunch of parks in Philadelphia last time—that was a lot of fun. The new one is kinda bogue, but there was a small one that was cool.

MRR: Tell me about the local music scene in Columbus, Ohio. What are some local bands that you enjoy playing with and seeing live?
Nick: Everybody left—I don't know why. The Deathly Fighter record was awesome. I love the Anna Ranger record, but they don't live here anymore so there you go. Tin Armor is awesome. I wish that people in Columbus were more jazzed about music, and I don't just mean crowds, I mean bands too. People seem to think that somebody owes them something for being in a band. Just have a good time! I see so few people actually having a good time.
Mickey: Pink Reason was really good. Messrs and Connections are really good too. I think we have some really cool venues that serve different purposes. We have a lot of cool house show spaces that have been around for a long time and most towns can't say the same. The scene is kinda segregated between people who go to house shows and people who go to bar shows, at least in the punk scene. There isn't a lot of movement at shows. I'd say that people in the punk scene are supportive with buying records.
Jeff: I really like Goners. There's been a lot of talk about All Dogs. I like them and think they are a great band, but on the other side of their split tape is another band called Slouch that are amazing. I feel like nobody gives any respect to the other side of the tape and people should.

MRR: How did you pick the name Nervosas and what does it mean?
Jeff: Nick came up with it and it doesn't mean anything.
Nick: At first we were called Witches of Kelso, after an old band of mine, and it got on a flyer—that lasted five minutes. Then we were gonna be called Durgs, just drugs misspelled. It was bad typing on the internet late at night in all caps and then it became a whole thing. Then we had a meeting to figure out what we were gonna be called and Mickey and Jeff were like, "we're really anxious about stuff, so what would reflect that?" I literally just wrote down like a thousand band names that had something to do with some sort of anxiety and Nervosas was on there. With the thousand band names they were like, "No, no, no, no," a thousand times. Then three days later they were like, "Nervosas is OK."
Nick: It's because we really like Nirvana and we really like Neurosis. One time our friend had a patch on his pants and this kid was like, "dude, I love that band Nervosas. I heard they like Nirvana and Neurosis so much that they made their band name that."
Mickey: That is so dumb.
Jeff: I also just found out that in Spanish it is a misspelling of *nerviosas*, which means "nervous girls."

MRR: What are the best and worst shows you've ever played with Nervosas?
Nick: Two fucking words: Des Moines. Never again.

NERVOSAS

Mickey: A very nice person named Anthony who lived in Iowa City set us up a show and told us it would be difficult. It was too far to drive to Iowa City so we played this bogue record store. I got my Hole postcard there and they had these cool ashtrays.

Nick: The record store was amazing! It was a head shop record store with all totally beat ass '70s records. All the records were dollar bin records but worth like $65! It was the weirdest priced record store ever! We didn't play in the record store, we played in an empty room behind the record store. It was fucking freezing!

Jeff: D.C. recently was the best.

Nick: The best time we ever played was the last time we were in Ottawa and played downstairs. Crusades played with us and a bunch of other cool bands.

Mickey: One of the best shows we ever played was with Autonomy and Doom Town at Cafe Bourbon Street in Columbus, that nobody came to. Of course we played so well at the show where no one was there!

Nick: The show in Carbondale with Autonomy was real fun. They did a Pailhead cover that was totally weird!

photo by Amanda Adams

MRR: Tell me about other projects outside of Nervosas that you have going on. Mickey, I know you play in another band. Jeff, you are in a slew of bands and handle booking at Ace of Cups (an awesome venue in Columbus). Nick, you are busy recording bands and also the sound guy at Ace of Cups. Extend on that stuff.

Nick: I have another band called Obviouslies that does whatever it wants whenever it wants and has whomever it wants in it. We have a record coming out sometime soon. I have an improv band that doesn't really have a name but it's still in the works, I play bass. I'm recording a lot—I'm doing the new Low Men record. If you don't know Low Men, they should be mentioned in *Maximum Rocknroll*! They're really good, interesting and fun, old dude punk Midwestern take on Fat Wreck Chords stuff. I finished another Hexers record; they are a soul garage band from Columbus. I don't record people from other towns, they don't know who the fuck I am. I recorded all the Nervosas stuff, it sounds like it does because it's my fault.

Jeff: I play guitar and synth in a band that sounds like Nico, called Cosmic Moon. I was in Pink Reason until Kevin decided to break it up. I play in a band that sounds like Chameleons meets Big Black called Gamma World. I book bands and it's a lot of work, but it's rewarding when I book a really good show. Since we live in Columbus, Ohio not the best bands route through here. I want your cool bands to come to Columbus so I can book them!

Mickey: I play in Estée Louder which was a band in the late '90s early 2000s that broke up and decided to reform. Both of the guitar players lived outside of Columbus so they asked me. It's a lot of fun and wild! I might have a new project coming up soon, too.

MRR: Your music doesn't include liner notes or lyrics. What are your songs typically about?

Jeff: Our songs are usually about either hating myself or hating other people. Some of the songs are about me and Mickey having similar feelings and experiences about things. Every song is about some specific instance or experience, but I try to make the lyrics more general and not just personal to me—even though they are. I want them to be more universal so I try and make them broader.

Mickey: I think it's really important to be honest when you're writing songs; just write what you know and what you feel. That's kinda how I do it. I think about all the things going on in the world and how they affect me and what my place is in it. Some of our lyrics are about problems with anxiety and mental illness, but trying to find a way out.

Jeff: Also I think it's cool and interesting that I sing lyrics that Mickey writes, so it's from a different perspective. Nick also wrote lyrics to one of our songs, "Waste of Time."

Nick: I think the most important thing that happens when you are communicating via an artistic or entertainment medium is what a person gets from something. It doesn't matter if it's the same thing that the artist intended. I actually believe that it's not all that important for the artist to intend anything, it's just important for them to make something.

MRR: Future plans? I know you are planning a big West Coast tour in the spring. Any new recordings in the works?

Nick: We recorded all the new stuff we have and a couple new things. We have enough stuff for a new tape with some wacky covers. Probably another demo tape and another LP—not recorded by us, but someone else. We just wanna play all the fucking time and record all the time!

Mickey: New Year's resolution: Black Flag practice schedule!

Jeff: We're doing a West Coast tour all through March. We're trying to go out to Europe sometime this year too.

Mickey: We'll go anywhere, if you wanna book us!

Nick: Except Des Moines!

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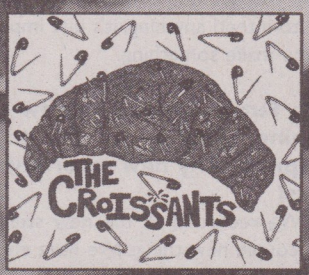

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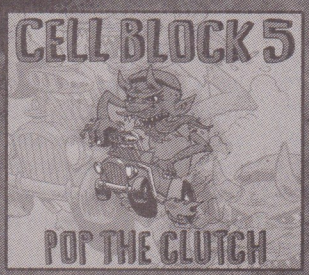

The long-awaited return of scene legends, Cell Block 5, back with a 13 track full-length Mastered by The Dead Kennedy's East Bay Ray. Featuring guests like Chris Freeman from Pansy Division , Sneebee, Abbylue, Pete D of The Adicts, Blag Dahlia, and Mark Diamond of The Dwarves.

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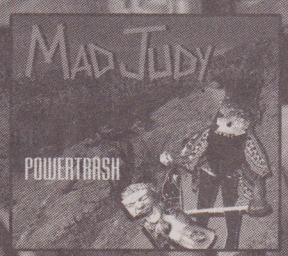

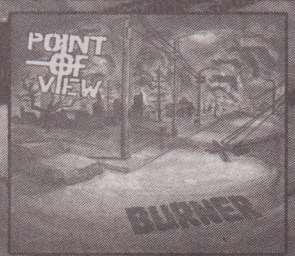

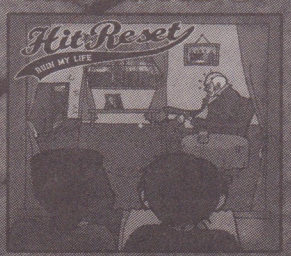

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KOMPLIKATIONS

The Trigger to Epiphany

Some time ago, I was again pillorying in grizzled and nostalgic gloom about having to search for bands with the extraordinary class of Tomata Du Plenty and his Screamers, or their French brothers-in-law Metal Urbain, was not only like a needle in a haystack, but also like looking with an electron microscope. An acquaintance of mine gave me the audiophile advice to adjust my ears to the direction of the Belgian/German border, specifically the Aachen/Luettich interface, where redemption would be waiting for me in Komplikations.

Stung by this promise of salvation, I headed down the digital highway and was blown away by a bona fide hymn of synth punk generations to come, simply titled Defect and sounding just like that. Nuclear war melting with burned down eargasms, sheer fury driven by hate and dead end despair—cut short by an electric storm of beats you'll only be able to experience once in your lifetime. Offenders by conviction, defining their music as an emotional trigger for ups and downs, for the distinct bits and pieces of their own life's experiences and disappointments. Instantly I knew that this band's music and message had to be spread as far as possible, to offer the people an alternative to the glutted drivel prison that a big part of our scene is stuck in.

So here it is, watch your step and jump into your very own Komplikations experience. Lead vocalist Alen tells you the ABCs of turning emotions into creative violence with his mates, Ben beats the drums through the darkest corners of your cerebral giros and Lio steals your cutie straight off the mattress, simply by sparking a lecherous synthesizer inferno. Interview with Alen by Dirk Le Buzz. Photos by nsophoto.com and joonu.de

MRR: Alen, having released your debut Step Forward on Rockstar Records in finest 12" vinyl tradition, what's your view on new bands having a much harder point to start at, due to more and more people only consuming music via download portals and assorted megabyte gobbins?

Speaking of our record, all I can say is that so far the sales are going very well with about 80% of the original pressing already being sold. The fact that the whole record is also available for free download on the label's bandcamp page didn't cause any harm. In fact, the opposite happened, as a lot of people who downloaded the record got in touch with the label afterwards to get a hold of the physical version. With us being a small band, and therefore only having had 550 copies pressed, a lot of those were sold at the shows we played so far. Meanwhile the debut 12" has completely sold out, but will be repressed very soon.

MRR: Would you say that the aforementioned problem is also dependant on a band's expectations towards the commercial availability of their release; and to the question of what the band is actually trying to represent? How high can the value of a release be estimated at, when it only serves the purpose of a shopping habit?

Having founded Komplikations in 2011, thoughts about sales figures were absolutely alien to me and still are, as the only reason for founding this band has been the fact that a very beloved person of mine had just stepped out of my life, and that I've been in desperate need of a trigger to channel my grief and anger—to at least feel a little bit better by playing the music I love.

I just wanted to scream over and over again as I just couldn't scream enough to get rid of all the things torturing me. So, after having positively put this screaming into practice, I decided that there should only be two other instruments within the band, so the audience can be able to at least properly hear my screaming. So, as you may have already thought, we are definitely not a band to serve any kind of shopping habits, but nevertheless, are more than proud and happy that our record is going well; not least because it's the first of my band efforts to be finally put on record. That's all!

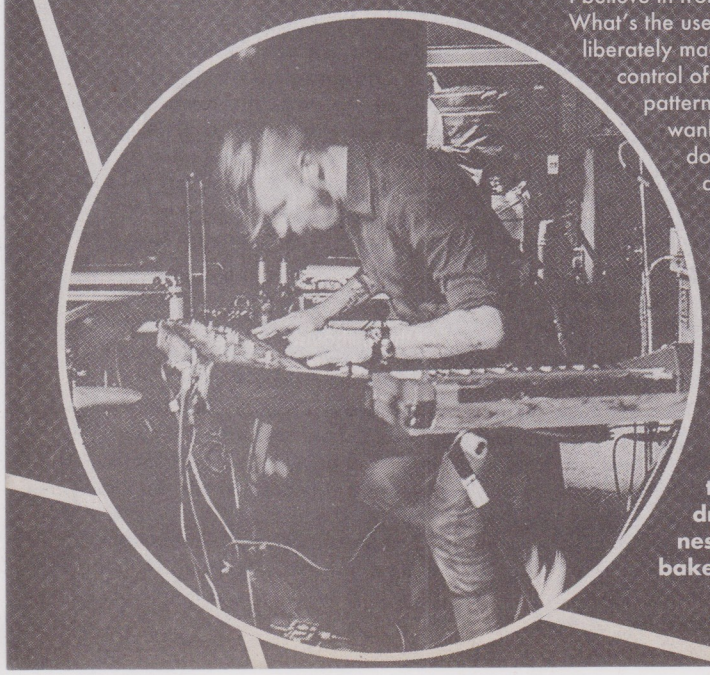
MRR: In this context, given the fact that the band isn't a punk-styled musical marketing strategy—and that the style Komplikations plays naturally attracts vinyl aficionados with proper background knowledge and interest anyway—that has a positive impact on the band too, right?

Yes, we are not a replaceable clone. Our music is too special for many, but I don't think that you implicitly need some kind of nerdy background knowledge to like us. Maybe that's the case in Germany, but looking at countries like France or Belgium, the sound of a synthesizer is way more known and natural within a band. The good thing is the fact that a lot of young people, who've never heard of the Screamers or the Units, are able to just neutrally listen to our music and enjoy it without having to draw any comparisons to old bands.

MRR: An unmistakable part of your sound, besides the aforementioned Screamers and Units, are bands like Nervous Gender or Metal Urbain from France. What are the reasons, from your point of view, that make these bands stand out from the masses? And how would you explain that, despite their legendary status, they lead a more or less shadowy existence within the scene's perception?

Without a doubt the Screamers is an absolutely fascinating band and has been the reason and inspiration for me to form the Komplikations, insofar as I didn't wanna have a guitar or bass in my band. I've loved both the Screamers and Metal Urbain for a very long time now but first found out about the Units in 2010. As far as Nervous Gender is concerned, I really have to admit that I still haven't genuinely got into them until today.

When I look at the Screamers and Metal Urbain clips on YouTube, especially "Panik" and "Paris Marquis" from the latter, all of my body hairs erect instantly—it's just pure energy. All of what they must have felt in those moments is also inside of me—it's my thing too. These bands have been, and still are, our initial impact—our base and our scaffold. Also, if we haven't invented a new kind of music like they have, I'd say we are able to give the whole thing our very own special and personal trademark. We once started with a Screamers cover as our first song and then found ourselves very soon afterwards. Of course we are not the only ones doing this kind of music and liking its style, but at the moment we are filling a gap here, doing this style our way.



MRR: Apart from the maintenance of the good old times nostalgia and the understandable wish of bands to make a living out of their work, would you say that in contrast to the spirit of such bands there are too many people within the scene today only using it as a stepping stone to their career—then ruefully crawling back into it after they've been kicked in the ass by their major label wish?

Well, there are indeed way too many bands without a soul, or even a spine, copies of copies of copies, musically as well as stylistically. Too many bands who've never understood that the only thing you need to be on stage is yourself. Success should grow and come up naturally when you and your band have the feeling that something special is happening out of your minds and bodies—when you're meeting that perfect moment where everything is fitting together, the songs, the band, all in a blink of an eye. The audience knows about such moments and returns the same energy and dedication they are receiving from the band. As Beethoven once said: "Music is a higher epiphany than any wisdom or philosophy!" It's those words I believe in from the very bottom of my heart! What's the use of a perfect style (or the deliberately made up opposite), having total control of your instruments, supercool patterns and having your audience wank and clap along when it doesn't come from your heart and you are sick of seeing your own mirror image? Although I am not the one generally condemning all major labels, a band should always be aware of what they might be varnishing into by deciding to sign to one.

MRR: How is it possible to survive within this jungle without being dragged into dubious business relationships and half-baked promises from so-called band managers, especially when other bands are more than willing to sell their integrity for a quick buck?

It's a steady character you need, and also already having a solid income apart from your band—which makes me think about the fact that my bank account is having a laugh at me, ha ha. Of course, it's also always very helpful to ask yourself the question, what kind of direction do you want your band to go in?

MRR: Besides your band, you also organize gigs in your hometown, Aachen, plus you're very active in a lot of other subjects supporting your local scene. How important is this engagement for you and how do you motivate yourself to keep on with your dedication in light of disappointments?

At the beginning of the '90s I thought about leaving my hometown to move to a big city like Hamburg or Berlin, but finally decided to stay here, because in a small town it's easier to make a name for yourself and create something unique—especially as Aachen was very interesting back then, with a lot of things to experience. Resulting from that I decided to organise gigs to do my part for a healthy and lively scene. That moment was 21 years ago now and it's still my biggest hobby; to organise gigs and parties. I've been doing so since 1999, under the banner of P.G.L. Aachen with P.G.L. standing for Punx Gegen Langeweile (Punx Against Boredom). There has once been a Berlin Chapter by way of the Shocks, and a Netherlands Chapter by way of Antidote, who used the name and logo with me my consent, as they were close friends of mine. Today, of course, I wouldn't do so again because it's my very special baby—exceeding the status of simple concert booking many times over. It's more like a social event, with people coming to the shows even without ever having heard of the bands on the bill ,just because they have trust in me and my musical taste. They come to have a fun and special night and I try to give it to them in any way possible. As a general rule I only put on bands I personally like, with a consequence being not putting on my friend's bands if I don't like them. The result of that rule is that none of the gigs I put on within the last few years have been poorly attended—which is good for me and my personal purse, from which I'm financing all those events, as well as for the bands, because they always get a guarantee from me, which they receive even in cases of bad attendance. Whether the gig financially breaks even or not, I'm happy. Of course I've never earned a shitload of money that way, but this is not what I'm looking for anyway—it's making friends and knowing that you have a place to crash in almost any corner of Europe and even further. This is the only wage that counts.

Beethoven once said: "Music is a higher epiphany than any wisdom or philosophy!" It's those words I believe in from the very bottom of my heart!

Apart from the aforementioned bad attendance, especially in the beginning, I've never been really disappointed by anyone or anything. For me, bad attendance to my gigs is something I feel ashamed off. That has always been, and will always be, this way. As far as bands go, I've never had any trouble. The booze in Aachen and the P.G.L. Aachen are just too good for anything bad to happen. All the new and great bands will always be motivating me to keep on doing what I do, as I really like to get to know new people and have guests in my house. A lot of special friendships originated that way, which I never would be willing to miss, and a lot more are still to be made. It's also an unbeatable feeling when a band and the audience is saying "thank you" at one of these nights for the good times they had. But the most important thing is having created an enduring moment to still think of in years and years on—for the bands, the audience, the venue, the crew and last but not least me—a remedy for all of our souls as there's enough daily routine in other parts of our life.

MRR: As a person who is organizing gigs, and playing in a band as well, you are in the perfect position to compare what you are trying to offer the bands as a local promoter and what you are being offered with the Komplikations. Is it really all roses for bands in the mystical touring paradise of Germany, or are there also things that sicken you to death?

As a general rule, you can really say that touring in Germany is a very fine and well organized thing, as there still are a lot of old, functioning venues, that are dedicated and work really hard, although the number of those venues has sadly been diminished within the past years. An issue that we just experienced, with the closure of the legendary Hauptquartier in Aachen after 30 years, which was almost a catastrophe for us—but compared to the situation in other countries, like England for example, it's still paradise here due to the alternative structures that have been established over the past decades. Nevertheless, a gig in Germany is also only as good as the promoter's effort and the sound engineer's quality of work, something you learn to recognize very fast as a touring band.

MRR: Let's get back to the Komplikations and talk about the German/Belgian joined forces within the band, as well as about your friendship to bands like Frustration, who have been quite successful with their last full-length—especially in Belgium and France where synth-punk and cold wave seems to have a much higher status than here in Germany.

First, I have to say that I'm really happy to play in a band that's crossing borders and countries! Once a week I'm driving over to Luettich, which is about an hour away, to rehearse with the band. Besides being pricy due to the gasoline I need, and the time I lose for the drive, this does have the much bigger positive aspect—that our rehearsals are very conscientious and focused. Also, I really enjoy being in Luettich, as my bandmates Ben and Lio are really good friends and very pleasant contemporaries to spend time with. Another positive aspect is the fact that we three all know a lot of people who are very supportive of the band. This has also lead to a lot of close friendships, with Frustration being one of those.

MRR: It sounds like the friendship between the Aachen scene and ones in Belgium, France and the Netherlands has already become a tradition, developed over a lot of years?

Aachen people are very fond of travelling and there are a lot of friendships with people in neighbouring foreign countries. It's a standard for us to visit parties, meetings and gigs there. Also, gigs in Belgium and the Netherlands are cheaper and the people are more into dancing, having a good time and just let loose more than in Germany. On the whole, our border triangle is very active

"Too many bands who've never understood that the only thing you need to be on stage is yourself."

and friendships have been treasured for decades. We simply call it Borderland, a gain for all of us and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else in Germany but here! It's two and a half hours to Paris with the Thalys, but it's six hours to Berlin with the ICE—even London is closer to us! Plus you don't have troubles at the border control anymore like it was in the '80s, where a visit to the Netherlands could have been a waiting game if the tollkeeper had a bad day—actually the borders are almost invisible today.

MRR: Which bands from those countries would you recommend to people deliriously wetting their pants with joy facing the Komplikations full-length?

I don't know of a band that could be compared to the sound we play, but there are a lot of great bands playing an awesome synth sound—some tending more to be more wave, while others being more experimental. Besides the always recommendable Frustration, the ones worth lending an ear or two to are la Femme, Pierre et Bastien, le Prince Harry, Cheveu, Scorpion Violente, Passion Armee and Peripherique Est.

MRR: Looking towards the near future, which steps will the band take until the total subjugation of mankind and which accessory vinyl super weapons will be released to reach this goal ?

Certainly the subjugation of mankind is one of our main goals, a goal that we will reach with a healthy dose of megalomania, an annihilating sex appeal and a lot of self-irony.

The follow up main weapon to our tried and true debut dose of napalm vinyl, entitled Step Forward has just finished the production process at Rockstar Records weapon factory and is called Poverty, so head on over and support the subjugation process!

Download the record: rockstarrecords.bandcamp.com/album/step-forward

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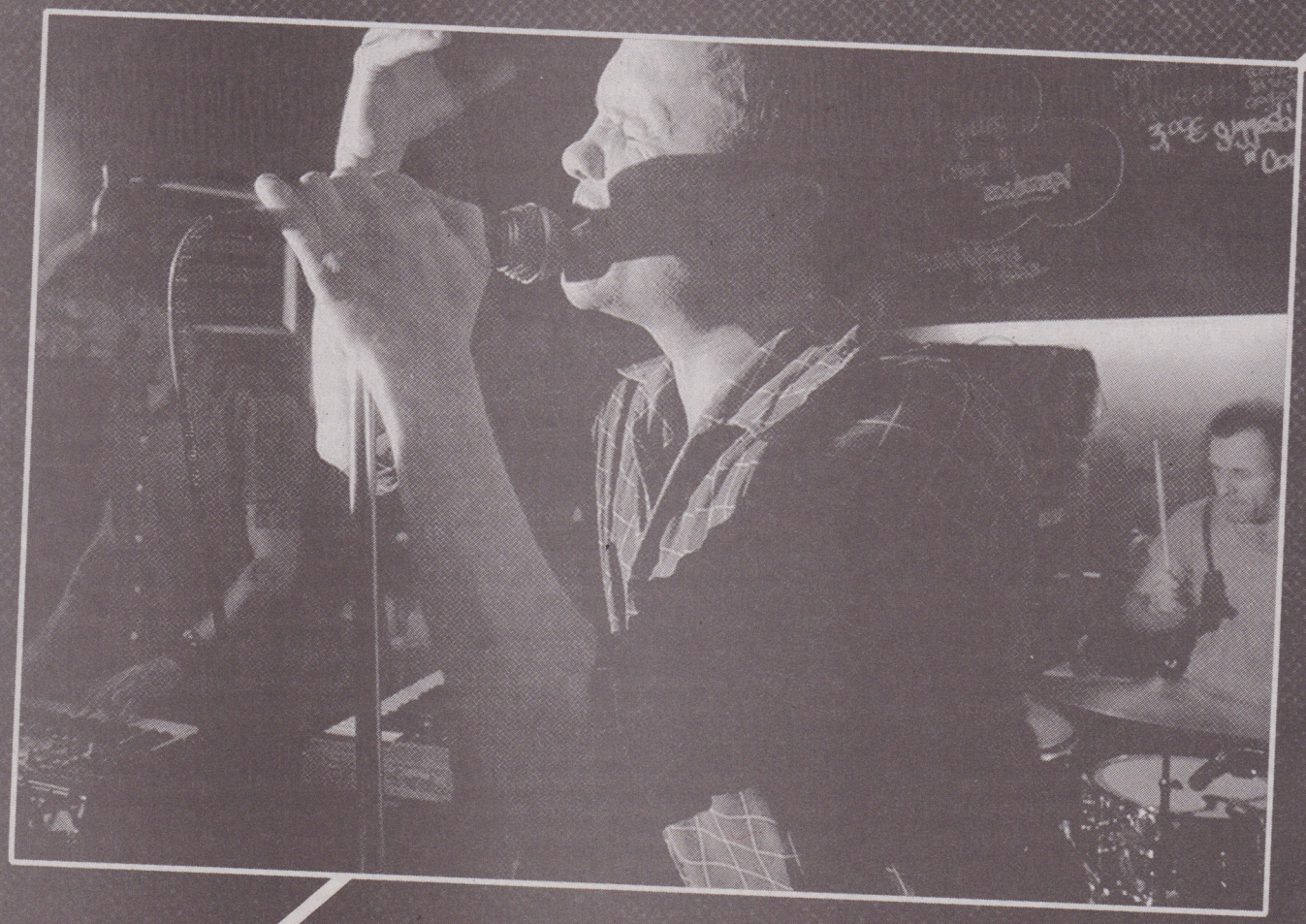

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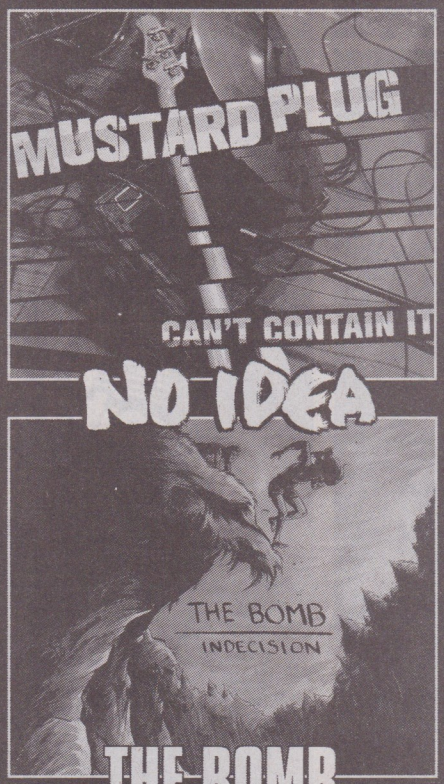

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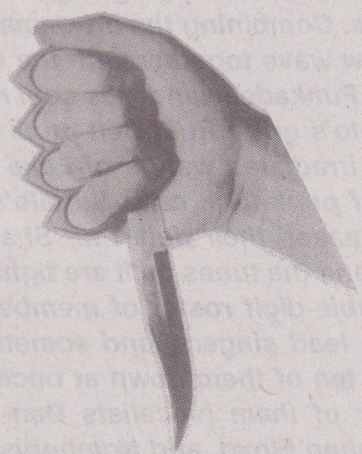

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MALLWALKERS

Buffalo's Mallwalkers have been flipping wigs in the Nickel City for the last couple of years. Combining the art-damaged sensibilities of early postpunk and new wave together with the everyone-and-their-brother maximalism of Funkadelic and '70s soul revues, and filtering it all through the Buffalo's gritty Rust Belt punk scene, Mallwalkers have reached into the irradiated waters of Lake Erie and pulled up a new mutant strain of punk-funk onto Buffalo's decaying shores. Now they've finally released their debut LP Shake the Rust Off on Peterwalkee Records, and the tunes on it are tight, urgent, funky and very catchy. Their double-digit roster of members includes a horn section, a dancer, two lead singers, and sometimes even multiple drummers. Pinning all ten of them down at once is never easy, but I was able to get four of them (vocalists Dan Carosa and Jamie Rowitsch, bassist Stephen Floyd, and trombonist Chelsea Merlo) to sit down for a chat about supercomputers, sponges, and hospital gowns, and other punk stuff.

Interview by Pat Kewley
Photos by Emily Churco

MRR: So, what was the genesis of Mallwalkers?
Dan: A big part of the reason that I wanted to do Mallwalkers is because a band like this didn't really exist here. I think in other cities there are other bands that exist on this wavelength, but at least in the circles I move in here in Buffalo, I didn't really see any groups like this. That was really the impetus to do it. If there had already been a bunch of bands like this I don't think I ever would have been motivated to do it.
Stephen: The way I remember the band forming was just Dan being around on the scene, doing stuff and booking shows and being friends with everybody, and Dan wanted to do a band but couldn't play an instrument. So eventually we were all like, "OK, let's just do a thing where you tell us what to do."
Chelsea: I joined because Norelle, [Merlo] who plays sax, is my sister, and she invited me to play. It was weird, because I play bass in other bands, but I had only taken maybe four or five trombone lessons back in high school. In the past, with playing bass, I've put so much effort into being proficient at my instrument, that to join a band and pick up an instrument that I really suck at really bummed me out for a minute. For Norelle to teach me a song—I didn't know where the notes were or how to make a specific sound with the instrument—was incredibly frustrating, but I'm getting the hang of it. Now, I love it—I'm a lifer. In fact, I'm gonna learn all the horns. I'm gonna take four lessons on each horn, so I will be equally proficient with all of them.
Dan: You could do a Rahsaan Roland Kirk thing and play all the horns at once. [laughter]

MRR: Jamie, you joined on vocals later?
Jamie: Yeah. But I was already an admirer of the band. I had the demo, and I used to play it at my work all the time.
Dan: When we asked Jamie to join, I think I pointed to a video of the Rezillos and said that was kind of the element that I wanted: male and female vocals, but on the same level sound-wise, with neither one more prominent than the other. Not like a lead vocalist/backup singer dynamic.
Jamie: Initially I was doing a lot of "Yeah! Uh-huh!" type stuff, because I wasn't sure exactly how it was all gonna work. But it's worked out well so far. Lyric writing with Dan has been really fun.

MRR: Do you guys sit down at a piano together, Lennon-McCartney style?
Jamie: Oh yeah, it's very spiritual! [laughter] But yeah, I knew the band already, and I really loved Dan's singing, and I knew I would fit in with that OK. These guys are all really great.
Dan: Please emphasize that point, that we're all really great.

MRR: So you guys just put out your first full-length, *Shake the Rust Off*, on Peterwalkee Records. How would you describe the sound of the LP to people who've never heard you guys before?
Stephen: I know it's a lot to live up to, but I usually just sort of mention the B-52s because they're ubiquitous enough and I don't have to say "party band" or any descriptors out loud. And if people make that "yuck" face because they only know "Love Shack" or whatever, then fuck 'em.

MRR: One thing I like about it is how most of the tunes have a lot of different elements going on alongside the standard guitar, bass, and drums—there're horns and backing harmonies and weird percussion and all sorts of other stuff—but you managed to keep it from sounding like a total soupy mess. It's mixed and recorded really well. How was the recording process-was it complicated because you guys are such a large group?
Dan: Laying down the tracks actually went relatively smoothly. We've recorded all the music we've ever recorded with Matt Smith at Hi-Lo Recording in Eden, NY. Matt is really accommodating, and doesn't blink an eye when we bring in a djembe to play on a punk record. He's also supremely zen about everything, which is really comforting for people like me who aren't exactly pros in the studio. Then the tracks were mixed by John Angelo, who did an equally great job of working with us.
Chelsea: Most of us have recorded with Matt at Hi Lo Studios with our other projects, so we all know him

pretty well and knew what to expect. His studio is in the attic of a little barn out in the country, and it's real nice and cozy.

Stephen: There were stuff we tried and then took out, it was pretty relaxed. Pat Shanahan (from the band White Whale) came to the studio with some ideas that I think helped the record out, like the keyboard in "Future Shock". I think, like any band's first record, there are a lot of things I'd have done differently, given a second chance. But I think the number of flubs and mistakes makes for a pretty accurate representation of what we're like live. All in all, I think I'm just happy the record got finished and I'm looking forward to doing another one with this band.

MRR: Did you guys approach it any differently from recording the stuff on your single or demo cassette? Do you think your sound changed at all?

Dan: Well, between the time we recorded the old songs and the new songs, we added four new members, so the sound definitely changed. Most noticeably, there are female vocals on every song on the record, which was a component I always wanted in the band from the beginning. As a whole, I think the songs on the full-length sound a bit more fully realized than the older songs.

Stephen: At this point I think there are too many people for the songs to really evolve or change too much more, because if we do decide to change stuff we have to let everyone know. I wouldn't be surprised if we changed something and forgot to tell someone.

MRR: The LP definitely covers a lot of ground stylistically—new wave and soul and funk and obviously punk—but the record still hangs together as one piece. Despite all the different elements, there's still an identifiable "Mallwalkers sound" running through all the tunes. It sounds like a unified album, one that you play front to back when you put it on. Was that something you guys were consciously thinking about when you were recording: how it was all going to hold together? Were you ever worried the record might be too all-over-the-map, sound-wise?

Dan: To be honest, due to our practice space situation and the places we normally play, I don't think any of us really had a complete idea of what the songs would sound like on the record. That being said, I think all parties did the best we could and we're all pretty satisfied with the results. Personally, I was always really into trying different things with this band, with the thinking that, because it's the same group of people making the music with the same instruments and the same production values, it would sound cohesive. I mean, I know some people think the band is kind of weird, but I don't think it's *that* weird.

MRR: Do you have a favorite tune on it, or one that you're particularly proud of?

Dan: I'm really happy with how "Future Shock" turned out.

Stephen: I like "Addicted to Sound" because it popped in my head one day in the shower and I started singing it and I brought it to band practice and now it's a song on a record. Life is weird.

MRR: It seems like people always resort to hyphenated genres when describing your sound: punk-funk-garage-whatever-wave. Do you think those are accurate, or does it not matter to you one way or the other?

Stephen: I'm just happy people hear any of that. The worst fear is that we've totally missed the mark, and what we think we sound like is really eighth wave ska—which is less of a concern now that we're a little more solid, but in the beginning I certainly thought, "what is this?" Like when we're touring, people constantly come up to you and bring up bands like Nation of Ulysess, Pylon, the Bush Tetras, Big Boys, James Chance and stuff, so I feel a little reassured. No one yet has mentioned any of our soul or funk influences, at least to me anyway; but maybe if we just keep trying harder we'll get that Trouble Funk comparison I've always wanted.

Dan: People can call it whatever they want, as long as they don't call it ska.

MRR: What kind of person would you recommend your album to?

Dan: Anyone who will listen to it. Punks, skins, rude boys, you name it.

MRR: With your live shows, you guys are known for having a theatrical element, whether it be wearing costumes or handing out props to the audience or other kinds of weirdness. How did that become a part of the band?

Dan: From the start, the band was always supposed to be kind of a fun party band, so early on we did some little stuff, like playing a couple shows where we all wore eye-black and stuff like that.

Stephen: The first time we ever did anything bigger than that, with costumes or props, it came from Steve Schmitt, our guitar player. Before a show one time he just told us he was gonna do something and we were like, "OK". Then at some point, it just became clear to him that this band was a safe place for those kinds of fun, weird ideas, and we all just ran with it.

Dan: One of my favorites was when we played Squeaky Wheel's Peep Show [an annual Buffalo party held by local nonprofit art and media center Squeaky Wheel] and we all wore hospital gowns. We had a bunch of extra ones, so Steve tossed them into the crowd, and at the end of the night there were all these people just drunkenly stumbling around wearing hospital gowns.

Chelsea: The theme was "Hot Mess" and all the bands were supposed to dress for the theme, and nobody did except for us—we were all wearing these gowns and pink medical face-masks. Incidentally, we've really gotta stop using any props that involve covering the mouth, for the sake of the horn section.

Dan: I remember feeling like that was the first show where it all kind of came together, what I wanted the band to be, all of the different elements. I think that was the first show with the entire horn section in place, and Jenny [Mallwalkers official dancer and dispenser of "dancefloor justice"]. That was the first show where it felt like all the sounds were there, all the visuals were there, and everything kind of clicked. It was this weird all-local show with some kind of ska band and a rockabilly band.

Stephen: It totally worked that night. I didn't see any of it in the moment, because I never look up when I'm playing bass, but I remember seeing videos of that show later, and the fact that people were actually willing to engage with all the craziness meant a lot to me.

Chelsea: There can be such a bad connotation to bands that try to force crowd participation, saying "Move up! Move closer! Sing along!" or whatever.

Stephen: Yeah, there's something gross about coming out and telling people what to do. But the fact that we

didn't tell them to do any of that was really cool to me. We could pass stuff out and people could just toss it on the floor, but the fact that they actually got into it and dug it was really cool. Personally, I would do that kind of thing anyway because it's entertaining to us, but the fact that other people were entertained by it was a really great feeling.

Chelsea: Steve's ideas are always very crowd-inclusive. They have a lot of participation from the people attending the show.

Jamie: My favorite was one show where Steve made huge signs with instructional dance-step diagrams on them, and people in the crowd were all doing the dances.

Chelsea: Once he made picket signs of the lyrics for our song "Baby Pterydactyl", which is basically a bunch of gibberish, like "I don't wanna be a… baby pterydactyl", or "sad supercomputer" or "geriatric taco".

MRR: I was listening to the record, and thought, "Is he saying geriatric taco?" But I wasn't sure.

Dan: Yeah, there's not gonna be a lyric sheet with the record....

Chelsea: There will be, but you'll have to send away for the secret decoder ring.

MRR: My favorite was the show where you all wore Kathie Lee Gifford masks, and handed them out to the audience.

Dan: I remember Steve texted me before that show saying "I'm gonna be a little late… I'm still working on the masks." And he hadn't told me anything about any masks. [laughs] And then he showed up with a big pile of Kathie Lee Gifford masks that had all the eyes cut out. I think Biff [trumpet player Eric "Biff" Bifaro] ripped the mouth out so he could play the trumpet.

Chelsea: I think we take ourselves un-seriously enough that we can do fun stuff like that, but still not be a joke band.

MRR: It's such a fine line, isn't it? Are you ever scared about that?

Stephen: Dan and I definitely talked a lot about that early on, where that line was. And one thing that really stuck with me was something from an old Buffalo band called Do Your Fucking Dishes. On their cassette tape it said: "we may be funny but we ain't no joke". I think that reflects us pretty well, too.

Chelsea: They were great. For their merch, they sold sponges. And they wore helmets.

Stephen: We're all in "serious" bands and I think that's important too, but I also think it's good to acknowledge that there's another side to life. I remember finding out that everyone in Fugazi were kind of goof-balls and when I was a kid I was like, "what?" But it makes sense to me now as an adult.

Dan: There're so many bands from the beginning of punk and new wave that did weird stuff like that and are revered today, but I feel like along the way there came some point when all of a sudden, if you wanted to be a punk band that wasn't thought of as a joke, you couldn't do stuff like that anymore. But bands like Devo or the B-52s or groups like that, they all wore costumes and were super fun and weird, but at the same time, they weren't joke bands. There might have been some critics who called them that, like the critic who called the New York Dolls "mock rock," but whatever. I feel like along all of the other influences that go into Mallwalkers, those early new wave bands might be the thing that I think we're closest to, at least in spirit.

MRR: Something I love about your sound is how you take all these elements from early postpunk, which can be a pretty serious, humorless genre, and add all these other elements to it that make it fun, like the soul and funk influences.

Dan: There was a description I read once, from when before the term postpunk was being used and funk was also still kind of a thing, where someone described bands like Joy Division and Gang of Four as "postmodern funk", and I kind of love that as a term. I feel like for a lot of people in our age bracket who are into underground music, there came a point when you couldn't play funk riffs, because it was associated with bands like Primus or Red Hot Chili Peppers, or you couldn't do anything related to reggae or you were Sublime or whatever. And the result was that a lot of valid, incredible music got totally cut off from punk because other bands who were sort of vaguely related to punk tried it and it went totally wrong.

Stephen: And hey, I love ska as much as the next person. I love those first two Specials records.

Dan: Yeah. Personally, I think that first Specials record is perfect, like one of the best records of all time. And so much of that '60s Jamaica stuff is incredible. But then there came a point in the '90s when the ska revival happened, and it was a nightmare.

Stephen: There was a point early on in our band when people automatically associated us with that kind of stuff because we have a horn section, assuming we're gonna be some Less Than Jake-style ska band, even though to my ears there's not even a shred of similar DNA between us and something like that.

Dan: And the funny thing is, with a lot of early ska stuff, like on that first Specials record, more than half the songs don't even have horns on them. It's the rhythms and guitar playing that make it ska. But whatever.

MRR: For a band as big as you guys are, how do songs actually come together?

Dan: What typically happens with most of the songs that we have so far, it's been some combination of drum and bass and guitar generating the skeleton of the music, and then vocals and horn lines coming afterward.

Stephen: Generally, we'll get together and just talk about an idea or a certain style or rhythm, and hash it out from there. One thing I love about Mallwalkers is that in other bands that I've been in, there's been a spoken or unspoken rule about specifically referencing other bands when writing stuff, a feeling like you can't just borrow stuff. Whereas with Mallwalkers, a lot of what we do is literally examine specific songs or certain kinds of songs and take them apart to try and figure out what makes them tick and how they work. For example, a big mystery to me is songs that only have one part. A lot of songs that I love are pretty much just one riff for five minutes or whatever.

MRR: I know what you mean. When tunes like that work, they can be so great.

Stephen: They're the best! But with a lot of bands, you try to present a song like that to your bandmates and they'll be like, "that's just one fucking part for five whole minutes—that sucks!"

Dan: Songs like that make me think of old James Brown songs, where it'll just be the drums and bass totally locked down, and then on top of it guitars are riffing, the vocals are doing something weird, there's horns doing something, everything's varied except for that rhythm section.

Stephen: Yeah, I really love songs like that, and our

"BANDS LIKE DEVO OR THE B-52S OR GROUPS LIKE THAT, THEY ALL WORE COSTUMES AND WERE SUPER FUN AND WEIRD, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, THEY WEREN'T JOKE BANDS."

song "Future Shock" was sort of an attempt at that, since I'm just playing an E for the whole song, and everything else around me is changing. But I'm still trying to crack that code. That sort of thing overall, that element, is different to any other band I've been in, and that makes it really interesting for me.

MRR: You guys just got back from a two-week tour around the Northeast. How did the shows go over?
Dan: I think the shows went about as well as new band could expect. We knew the band could be a tough sell to new audiences, but I think every show had at least something redeeming about it, which was a minor miracle. I had never toured with a band for more than a weekend before this summer, so it was a bit of an experience for me. Everyone in the band was great though. One thing I didn't anticipate was how long it would take ten people to use the bathroom wherever we stayed. Everyone who booked us or hosted us was really accommodating. Trying to keep everything organized was certainly a task, but it was a very positive experience overall.
Stephen: We only got on each other's nerves to the degree that was expected. The only other touring I've done has been with like eight or nine people, so it wasn't a big shock to me. Although, I recently just did my first weekend with just like four people and I have to say it was almost weird, like *too* comfortable.

MRR: Did you play anywhere really unusual, or on any weird bills?
Dan: As the band has developed, I've come to the feeling that because of our hodge-podge of styles, Mallwalkers never really fits on a show, but we can also get away with playing with bands from a wide array of scenes. Locally, we play with just about everyone tangentially associated with the punk scene, and tour was kind of a reflection of that. One night it would be pop-punk bands with a rapper thrown in, the next night it would be a hardcore show, the next night it would be a pair of acoustic songwriter-types. Part of that is the necessity of being a little-known band that's grateful to be playing with anybody in a city we've never been to, but I also think that the nature of the band makes us a little more flexible than your average touring punk band.

MRR: Did you have a favorite show on the tour?
Stephen: Every show was fun, but I'll never forget walking away from the house we played in Bloomington late at night and seeing Chris from Ghost Mice/ Plan-it-X stomping around the open porch with a snow shovel over his head, scraping it on the roof, shouting something unintelligible, while everyone was screaming. It was all I could have asked for and more for my first Bloomington show.

MRR: On tour, do people ever not know what to make of you guys, or do the crowds usually buy into what you're doing pretty easily?
Stephen: I feel like bringing Jenny, our lead dancer, really helped convert the crowds. She's an official member of the band, but I figured she wouldn't want to spend her vacation with us. But she did, and it was awesome. I don't look up too often at the crowd while I'm playing, but I distinctly remember people looking more comfortable by the end of the set and I think she sort of helps set the tone. Early on in the tour a couple of people told me that same thing, so maybe that shaped my perception, but it's a cool idea!

MRR: With all the different venues you guys play in—clubs, halls, parties, galleries—is there any one setting that you like the best?
Dan: Just a personal preference, but I've always favored DIY spaces where the music, or whatever is happening, is the main reason everyone is there.

MRR: There're so many of you—do you ever run into problems trying to cram the whole band to perform in some tiny space? Does anyone ever get smacked with a horn or guitar?
Dan: We've played in some pretty tight spaces on tour, but we managed. I think the only show we've ever played where things got dicey in terms of space was a New Year's party we played a couple years ago at

a local house. We played in a living room on Buffalo's West Side, and the show was getting really wild, and Norelle nearly got her teeth knocked in while playing her saxophone. That being said, we may have egged everyone on a bit when we hung a piñata from the ceiling…

MRR: How difficult is it to organize a tour for a band with as many members as yours?
Chelsea: To book a tour with ten people who all have full time jobs and other bands is a nightmare.
Stephen: It's funny—booking this tour was so, so complicated that it really made me think about how absurd and insane and awesome bands are. Every single night of the week in Buffalo there are three shows that sound awesome, with bands you've never heard of from all over the country. And sometimes you take that for granted because there are so many bands out there, but when you think about it, it's sort of amazing that *any* band happens. You've got to learn to play an instrument, which is fucking hard, and practice, and do shows, and write songs, and record, and you try as hard as you can to make it not suck. Not to mention booking shows, trying to guilt your thirty friends into going to some show so you can give some band that you like a hundred bucks so they can get to the next town. And then they have to go back to their shitty jobs when it's done, or maybe they quit their shitty jobs just to go on this one tour… Just the fact that there are ten of us in this band together, it doesn't make sense that it can even happen at all, it's so complicated and unlikely. And I'm so grateful that I get to do it. It's really easy to fall into the trap of taking it for granted, but it's fucking amazing. Booking this tour made me thankful that anyone can ever come through town and play shows, because it's just so hard to do anything. But here we are in Buffalo, and there're a million great bands coming here every week—it's crazy.

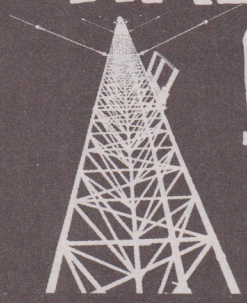
MRR: So that's all the serious questions I had…
Chelsea: So move on to them goofy questions!

MRR: OK. Favorite malls, and why. Go!
All: Main Place Mall! [Located in the heart of downtown Buffalo; mostly vacant except for a small handful of stores and the ghost of a food court]
Dan: They definitely have the best pizza.
Chelsea: Also, we recently learned that the Main Place Mall is filled with supercomputers. Everyone thinks it's this shut-down decrepit mall, but now they're leasing out the vacant stores as data centers, so it's all futuristic supercomputers now. We want to play a show there so badly.

MRR: You have a song called "Funk Police". I was listening to it and was trying to figure out: are *you* guys the Funk Police, or are the Funk Police some third party who you're on the run from or something?
Chelsea: They're a third party. It's a special police force that patrols the funk and maintains the purity of the funk. In my imagination, if we were to play a show at the Main Place Mall for example, the Funk Police would show up and protect us.

MRR: OK, one final goofy question. I was just reading about how after Martin Luther King got assassinated in '68, in Boston they were worried about rioting in the city. James Brown happened to be playing in town that night, so they aired his show live on TV and supposedly everybody stayed home to watched that, and this supposedly cooled out all the tension and saved the city from riots—according to legend. What civic crisis do you think a Mallwalkers show could prevent, if any?
Chelsea: A fashion crisis, maybe. Or maybe Black Friday riots at the malls.

MRR RADIO ON THE AIR!



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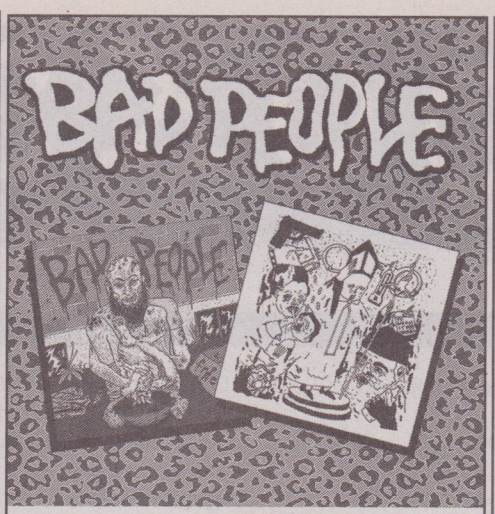

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BOOKS

Dreadnaught: King of Afropunk*
D.H. Peligro
366 pages • $18.00
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D.H. Peligro of the Dead Kennedys (and Peligro, and once upon a time the Red Hot Chili Peppers) writes like a fantastic drummer, and that is not meant as an insult. You think of those deep underground after-hours hipsters who drummed in legendary bands as addicts who lived for the transgressive flame that heated their playing to bliss (Topper Headon, for example). We rarely ever expect to read sumptuous, revealing personal accounts of the feral-playing, always completely stoned drummer; they're not known for articulately yammering about their excesses to the press.

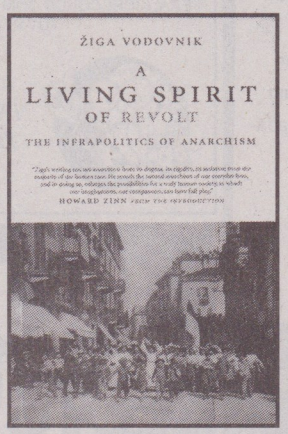
However, for those of us who adored the music of the Dead Kennedys (if not always the shrill vocals and media whoring of its original front man, Jello Biafra) Peligro composes a rehab story that drives its point into your skull as crushingly as fans have enjoyed his fast and furious beats. He is in charge of every little fill you need (humorous, intimate details on the vices and adventures of San Francisco's first wave hardcore tribe, as it grew out of the freak-and-queer-filled hard rock scene of the mid-'70s) and surprise digressions galore (and plenty of abscess-rotten junkie gore). And though he says the Dead Kennedys' East Bay Ray and Klaus Flouride were known for getting particular amounts of "action," Peligro himself manically trades out (short, strong) punk ladies one after another, as he travels on tour with the Dead Kennedys, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and his own Peligro around the world and apparently into every shooting gallery and dealer on earth (the scenes in Trenchtown and Brazil are fascinatingly lurid yet described with empathy and love.)

Peligro's romantic life is indeed flabbergasting, being so into the "herron," booze, coke, weed, etc., that you would think he'd have slaughtered his libido along with creating those gaping holes in his legs and ass and putting tracks from neck to toe. However, his luck in love is believable, because as much as he oozed in his sickness, he is also an extremely charming scribe and must be a really sweet guy. You find yourself agreeing with him about people and politics and want him to win and then he's down the shithole again. After reading a couple hundred pages of Kierkegaardian-level repetition of chemical damnation, you also want to beat the shit out of him. "Give up!" I cried at the pages, as he does the stupid thing again and ends up in the ER, homeless, in jail or in a wheelchair or in a combination thereof. But I couldn't throw the book at the wall. I had to keep reading. Peligro makes you care about him even when he doesn't seem to be concerned with himself in any other way but desolation. Maybe having a (fake) dad who put a double-barrel shotgun in your face as you tried to sleep as a kid, or if you always felt like a second-class citizen since growing up in a St. Louis ghetto because of the color of your skin in the eyes of authorities (and even racist fellow punk rockers), as D.H. experienced, this might explain the perfervid self-destruction.

The last half of this book is going to be a bit of a slog if you're not into fiercely sobering redemption stories—but it's probably one of the most intense ones you'd ever care to read. The formation of the Dead Kennedys from when Ray sees D.H. in a band called SSI, the way the band kept him employed while the drummer probably worked insane amounts of magic to not appear completely fucked up all the time as they recorded and toured, is a legendary saga—and a reminder that the band started as an actual mission against Middle Class American stupidity.

There's one very tight, good chapter about being black in the hardcore scene, including his mutual respect for Dr. Know of Bad Brains, and how D.H. and H.R. got better and worse to each other in their shared existence in music. I could have used about 60 more pages about music history and scene shit-talk, but I think Peligro told the tale he wanted to tell about his slow, painful transmutation and it arguably lives up to the book's title.

—Chris Estey



A Living Spirit of Revolt: The Infrapolitics of Anarchism
Ziga Vodovnik
232 pages • $18.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

Never has there been a better time for a lucid, lean, inclusive primer-history about anarchism. We're blessed that it's from Faculty of Social Sciences professor Ziga Vodovnik, someone deeply knowledgeable and personally passionate about those who are linked officially and ontologically by a "suspicion of authority." A previous work of his, *Ya Basta! Ten Years of the Zapatista Uprising* (AK Press, 2004) cohesively detailed how regional revolutionary acts in 1994 would eventually lead to the rising of the anti-globalist movement internationally at the turn of the century. In a similar, more sweeping way, Vodovnik here superbly elucidates how many levels and layers of anarchism have fed into each other or synchronistically arrived at the same roots of rebellion.

An anarchist can be defined as someone "suspicious of authority." It is someone who doesn't necessarily think that authority can solve disorder and injustice; in fact, it's arguable that the government and marketplace might be their primal cause. This book happily comes out at a time when popular mainstream writers often fear, mock, and sloppily suggest that anyone wanting to use force to overthrow authority or endorse a lack of civil commitment to others is an anarchist (misunderstanding the majority of beliefs and behaviors.) Vodovnik shows that anarchists have often been the only ones left in society who are concerned with all-encompassing oppression, exclusion, and economic exploitation, and not willing to "trade revolution for a dictator." Vodovnik weaves theories from argued anarchist "classics" into concise reporting on anarchy's greatest peaks and certain valleys, succeeding in constructing a nimble narrative of ideas, actions, personalities, struggles, and even successes (Orwell's Catalonia; May 1968 in Paris and what that spawned, for example).

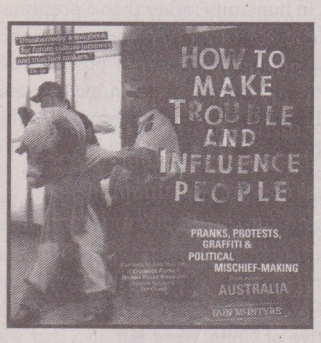
It's refreshing to have this book's clear-headed analysis of a way of life that somehow bizarrely connects Cartesian philosophers, Taoists and Buddhists, the arrival of Proudhon's political definition of the term, pacifistic New England Transcendentalists, German immigrants who wanted to extrapolate the freedom of the human spirit at the end of the 19th century, the evolution of

ideological traditionalists, the Dadaist usurpers of the spectacle, the pop-up inspiration of Temporary Autonomous Zones, and finally, the phenomenon of trans-global citizens. Listed are individualized and collectivized protests against the horrors that have been done in the name of obedience throughout recent regime and market-driven civilization.

A Living Spirit of Revolt is not a bloated text of controversies, contradictions, and mystifications; it doesn't strive to take down every internal conflict and dogmatic detail of clans and cliques throughout anarchism's official existence since Proudhon. As Vodovnik has quoted Zinn in the press, the work of anarchy is often done by people not professing the ideology by name. Sometimes anarchy is that one person standing against something that seems reasonable, such as democratic rule. Sometimes it is a group with altruistic motives who came together for the sake of social justice (yet its organizational aspects and altruism may not seem "anarchist" on the surface.) What are their basic histories and how may they all fit in with each other? Most importantly, what do they all really have in common, if much at all? Vodovnik finds what worked best for each, but doesn't leave out the mistakes or possible problem areas. He does openly favor non-violent examples while stressing unity among activists, but *A Living Spirit of Revolt* makes a solid argument that

only anarchy could be the living mother of justice and peace.

—Chris Estey



How to Make Trouble and Influence People: Pranks, Protests, Graffiti and Political Mischief-Making From Across Australia
Iain McIntyre
320 pages • $24.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

While I have never been to Australia, there is a pretty good chance we west coast/northern hemispherists are going to be relocating down under sometime in the next few years, if only to escape the impending Fukushima radiation scourges. If this book is any indication, we are going to have some comrades in street theater, political dissent and supporting indigenous rights to march with.

Engaging the titular trope of "How to _____ and _____ people", joining Lenny Bruce's masterpiece, *How to Talk Dirty and Influence People* and another really creepy self-help business text (*How to Win Friends and Influence People*) PM Press has brought us a *How to Make Trouble and Influence People: Pranks, Protest, Graffiti and Political Mischief Making From Across Australia.* Iain McIntyre collected a history of rebellion that courses just beneath the official record, the cover of this book has eight different fonts and a picture of a large bear being arrested. It's great and makes me think fondly of the interweaving of art, music, politics, theater that has become the de facto cultural blend from which spawns the visionaries who through defiance have demanded, and incrementally affected what the powers that be have begrudgingly acknowledged, even if that recognition was by arrest and censorship.

Archived as crime by authority, but revered as tactical roadmap by those who work to improve the world, the history of dissent is often lost in itself. This book is an attempt to correct that. Amalgamating four books with similar origins and titles into one, it presents radical traditions in their historical scope, reminding the reader that this is one long battle for equality the planet has embarked on rather than a finite action, with a clear beginning, middle and end. All who work and yearn for a better world have been moving through history as a team, spanning the ages with our stride and unlike the great monster of capital and greed, where we step, flowers spawn. If not flowers, at least bad-ass graffiti and lots of weird people in costumes singing songs, many of which are documented here. Some of the stories are quite beautiful, daring hilarious and seem like a bunch of fun.

Others involve violence and arrest; often overlapping with the joyous, spontaneous demand for freedom, but nonetheless remind one about how intricately the world in its entirety fits into itself. Countless intimate bonds, romantic or otherwise, have been formed on the barricades.

That's the counterculture. The roots are deep. The affinities are myriad. The Indigenous populations of Australia had an interesting synergy with the convicts imported as prisoner/colonists to form the ultimate post-colonial thorn in the side of authority. Subaltern milieu extraordinaire, the mélange of escaped prisoners and segregation provided a fertile field for revolutionary foment. It's all too logical given how thoroughly fucked over both groups were.

The chronological format, starting with indigenous resistance, and in a brilliant conflation of post-colonial discourse and rock and roll culture, refers to the "British Invasion," rather than discovery of a continent, is a significant boon to understanding how anti-authoritarian practices evolve. Further, the specificity of each description in location and year, provides a handy bootstrapping to my internet enhanced ADD. Itemized by event, it's easy to forget that a blockade required the activists to not leave unless dragged away by police for their efficacy.

The historical dislocations resulting from industrial revolution and the new class of brigands spawned by the American Revolution, had forced the overcrowded hand of the crown to send the troublemakers overseas. It is fairly easy to see the trajectory from political refugees and prisoners to upstart colonies as inevitable. Even further the so-called "five eyes" or tacit intelligence gathering network of the former British Colonies, makes quite a bit of sense when one remembers that much of the British colonial power was actually exiled dissenters, greedy speculators and indebted workers obliged to work for nothing overseas.

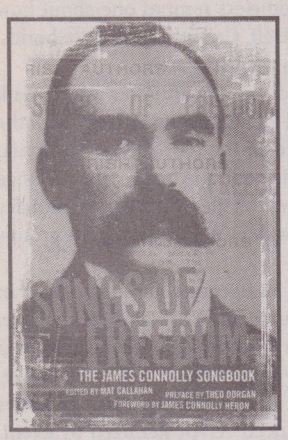
Obviously they shared data then and continued to share it throughout the dawn of the information age. Which brings up an interesting tangent to this book. There must be a relatively similar text that is produced by counter-revolutionary workers, or what is sometimes referred to as "police". Or is there? Do surveillance police statists have any concern for the humanity and culture of those they actively suppress? Is there historical continuity with the totalitarian workplace? Or are they just blandly following orders, robot automaton cops, indifferent to emotion and pain, exerting the violence required for sovereign authority, which this book reveals was deliberately ignored during British annexation of occupied land.

A web of counter-intelligence, police harassment, suppression, and revisionism has blurred the true history. While I may not, as a Californian understand the complexities of Australian resistance to colonialism, capitalism and violence, I can find common ground in language and action.

From the 1960s onward, that spawning ground for a future still being explored, the tactics and activities start to sound familiar. They resonate with experiences in various street actions, protests, and guerilla interventions over the last decade and remind me this struggle is global and continuous. Stealing Picasso paintings and demanding better arts funding, snarky graffiti removal, radio piracy, outlaws and indigenous insurrection an inspirational prism to view your own radical actions through.

Despite the penetration of capital and its armies into every corner of our world, into the very fabric of our bodies, between our neurons, signaling desire and commodity fetishism along invisible networks, this battle is ongoing. And it is inevitably in favor of the underdog. Nobody wins. Ever. So the fact we rebels have been under the boot and laughing about it for so long, only assures us that our struggle is righteous and we are winning. To find the same thing happening in Australia is encouraging. It means we will have people to change the world with once we flee California and its radioactive rain. Though, come to think of it, Australia is in the Pacific Ocean also and probably just as fucked as we are, so perhaps what I mean to say is that it means it's nice to know we have revolutionist comrades in the southern hemisphere who did everything they could to prevent the world from ending horribly.

—Zach Houston



Songs of Freedom: The James Connolly Songbook
James Connolly (edited by Matt Callahan)
PM Press
96 pages • $12.95
www.pmpress.org

"No revolutionary movement is complete without its poetical expression. If such a movement has caught hold of the imagination of the masses, they will seek a vent in song for its aspirations, the fears and hopes, the loves and hatreds engendered by the struggle." —James Connolly

For years, you occasionally go to a bar that shall remain nameless with an inspirational quote painted on the wall. Something about the revolution needing poets or rather revolutionary movements needing their poetical expression. The bar is too expensive, has shitty food and is pretty much a practice space for various Berkeley-twinged jam band mash-up pop crap massacre inducers.

In other words, the bar is precisely the kind of place that turns one to a life of paradigm smashing insurrection in the first place, rousing the populace to discontent with war songs, drunken wobbly inheritor to the red flag, and as you stumble out its doors to walk home, you are lost in the rapture-on-tap magnificence of the poetico-revolutionist conflation of said mural.

You are practically singing and had you been aware of the source of your inspiration, you could have broken out into James Connolly's versified lyrics, your drunken slur booming into the night announcing the coming of the "socialist revolution," denunciations of nationalism, urges toward brotherhood and a common comradery among all people except for the damn rich bastards who stole time and kidnapped children for profit; none among them shall hear the music escaping the lips of the proletariat. Rich people can't hear music.

Luckily for us in the audible trenches of class warfare, there are folks who compile the words of the original movement's figureheads and distribute them. Songs of Freedom from PM Press, edited by one Mat Callahan, with prefaces, introductions and forewords galore, offers us this glimpse into the literary/editorial work of the martyred Irish artist, poet and revolutionary.

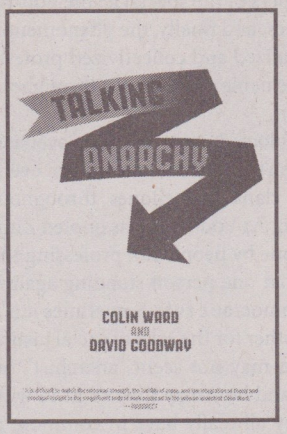
Other than the martyr part we all should hope to be involved in such a momentous historical episode. And we are. The call for social class transformation is more pressing than ever and luckily for us workers, less about the conditions we toil under and more about what we are going to do with all our free time when the robots do our work for us.

The answer is sing. And make art. Publish weird pamphlets, zines, books, T-shirts media whatever, create pictures within pictures and generally live the highest most ecstatic lives we can. And now we have a songbook from a century ago to ensure the roadmap from those who died to make our world possible is not left unmarked.

The historical import of holding a collection of what are essentially zines from Ireland 100 years ago is a significant amount of the enjoyment of this text. If you like history, old fonts, political organizing, this is a fascinating glimpse into one mans corner of an ongoing global battle for equality. I wish there was a larger collection of contemporary writing and graphical foment because the work here begs for a larger historical context that is lacking in this slim volume. It was good enough to want more of the same, but there may not be much payoff to anthologizing, because one gets the impression that this James Connolly character is quite the dashing revolutionist. I assume he played these songs and didn't just write them? He seems to have written some and collected various others for compilation.

On that note, anyone with an acoustic guitar who believes the strumming and shout-along anthem is the best way to affect solidarity, ought to have this text, but they may want to go for the CD that comes separately; which is actually kind of a shame to not include in the book for a few extra bucks. Without the music, we read, gathering what we can see rather than the immutable glory that is a song, and let's be fair this is a rock and roll magazine so the music ought to be premised before the liner notes, and this is basically a collection of liner notes from a century ago and, well, it's pretty glorious to read and the songs seem great, but I bet James Connolly was amazing to see live.

—Zach Houston



Talking Anarchy
Colin Ward & David Goodway
165 pages • $14.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

From the radical folks at PM Press comes a reprint of the definitive text by veteran anarchist thinker, the late Colin Ward. As his death seemed to be approaching, following the request of an extensive interview text with Ward as subject, and the work of David Goodway on his writings, the collaborative project was initiated through letter correspondence between the two resulting in the 2003 Five Leaves Publishing release of *Talking Anarchy*.

The book serves as a singular text with a title concisely chosen to confirm its purpose as a guide to the political mind of Colin Ward, anarchist. The contents of the correspondence come across as if compiled during a series of in-person prompts and responses guided in a conversational manner despite the lack of in-person contact during the initial collection of questions and answers.

Fundamentally, what separates the views of Ward's anarchism to opponents' relies on its optimism, idealism, and belief in humanity rather than a presumed role of constant antagonism. On top of this, Ward's system of belief branches out from one core belief that not only is the anarchist system possible, but in fact, the system is *always* present, inherently human, and run outside, and as a reaction to, the coercive, tyrannical institutions and bureaucracy. This fundamental aspect of Ward is something punks everywhere can espouse and the lens, as Ward elaborates, can and should be applied to all aspects of life.

Despite how the title could be construed, this is not the ideal source for an introductory crash course on anarchism. Rather, it is best approached by a reader with at least an intermediate knowledge of different perspectives on anarchism or political theory in a broader sense. The benefits of the book and the conversational approach utilized by Goodway is that the reader not only gets an overview of the political perspective of Colin Ward but also that you are exposed to his origins and thus what experiences likely got him to where he stood at the time of solidifying his worldview. Although, this book can be appreciated by the layman with minimal background knowledge on anarchism, to get its full value the reader should be aware of not only the basic tenets of anarchists like Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Goldman, but particular points made in prominent writings and speeches as well.

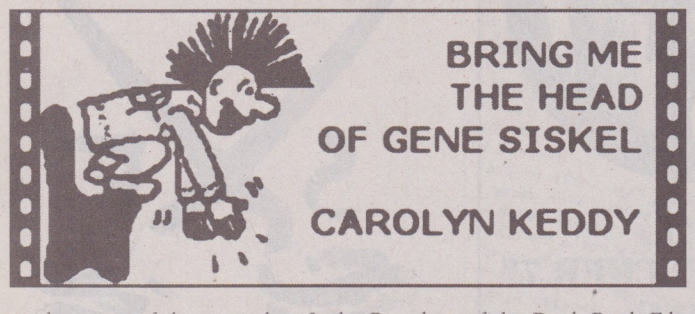
I went into the book expecting an introductory account of anarchism in a short, digestible size. There is an element of truth to this but it is not done solely with this purpose and if a reader is looking for a rudimentary account, I'm sure PM Press has something for them with this purpose. As this is a re-released book, there was the question of whether any updates would appear in the introductory materials but this does not appear to be the case or changes were minimal and negligible.

Unlike some political writings that seem to expire after a period of relevance, *Talking Anarchy* is the type that will remain valuable because it is a snapshot of the experiences and viewpoint of an influential thinker that will not diminish any time soon. Its purchase can be justified in any revolutionary home library. The only aspect of the book I wish was more prevalent in the book is the previous works of Colin Ward in the form of his shorter essays and articles. This would have made for a more fulfilling package to supplement the conversation that covers the entire book. However, the other works of Colin Ward can still be found pretty easily and some minimal internet searching. This was not a huge concern of mine.

As Goodway suggests in his introduction, this text is the closest thing that came to an autobiography for Colin Ward during his life and, with this in mind, gives the book value as a near-definitive resource on a political thinker. PM's release of *Talking Anarchy* after a decade is a reminder of the lasting value of Ward's perspective and an accessible entry point for those digging into the ideology of a valuable, if not often quoted, thinker of the left.

—Miles McClain

MOVIES



It is that time of the year when I, the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, release our list of best films of 2013. Making these best of lists is a bunch of bullshit, but who am I to deny anyone, including myself, this annual ritual? Here is the list of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2013.

Big Star: Nothing Can Hurt Me
Big Star was underappreciated in their own time, then became legendary after their breakup. **Nothing Can Hurt Me** is what every documentary should aim to be, a celebration of the band as seen through the eyes of the people who loved them. Of course, there is a sad story behind it, but the music lives on. If the viewer wants to listen to Big Star's music after seeing the film then the director has succeeded. Drew DeNicola and Olivia Mori have. (bigstarstory.com)

Bad Brains: Band in DC
This is one of the few music documentaries to successfully mesh the past with the present. It is fortunate that Bad Brains have an interesting formation story and that their lead singer HR is so weird. My favorite scene is HR delivering a monologue to three boys, who are beyond amused by it after he walks away. As one of the boys states, "that dude is awesome." (badbrainsmovie.com)

Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer
A rather straightforward documentary of the trial of three members of the Russian feminist art band Pussy Riot. After performing "punk prayer" on the alter of Christ the Savior Cathedral in Moscow Nadia, Masha and Katia were charged with anti-religious hooliganism. The filmmakers attempt to present an objective view of an obviously biased case. They interview people on all sides of the argument, allowing each to speak their mind. Two of the three women serve sentences for their actions, yet they continue to speak out against Putin while on the stand. (hbo.com)

In Heaven There is No Beer
I prefer the small story to the big one. **In Heaven There is No Beer** tells the story of a Los Angeles music scene supported by Kiss or Kill, a few people who book bands that no one else in LA was interested in booking. The whole thing lasts merely five years, from 2002-2007, and most of the documentary views like a year book, but stories like this should always be told. (moderndistrib.com)

Beware of Mr. Baker
Drummer Ginger Baker states in this documentary "God is punishing me for my past wickedness by keeping me alive and in as much pain as he can." I could easily believe that that might be very true after watching this film. Baker may be an amazing drummer, who is constantly seeking to perfect his trade, but he does so at the expense of everyone he comes in contact with. Baker is not a nice guy and everyone in the documentary, including himself, is happy to tell you about it. (bewareofmrbaker.com)

Radio Unnameable
This is the somewhat heartbreaking story of WBAI radio personality Bob Fass, who provided a platform for folk singers, '60s protestors and anyone else who needed to be heard during the 1960s and 1970s. Then he was unceremoniously fired when station management decided he and other established DJs needed to go. It shows both the power of radio and the modern age's indifference to it. (radiounnameablemovie.com)

Muscle Shoals
It's the story of the Mississippi River and a small town in Alabama that surprisingly became a mecca for singers and musicians from all over the world. Aretha Franklin recorded "Respect" there. Wilson Pickett recorded "Mustang Sally" there. The Rolling Stones recorded "Brown Sugar". And the list goes on. This is the story of the people who made all that happen. (muscleshoals.co.uk)

The Punk Singer
Thanks to Felix Havoc for pointing out that "The Punk Singer" is a Julie Ruin song and therefore an appropriate title for a documentary about Kathleen Hanna. Though reading the lyrics for that song, I am still skeptical that it is the appropriate title for this doc. **The Punk Singer** is an interesting look at the various stages of Hanna's artistic life through her sudden decision to stop performing and her current battle with Lyme disease. (thepunksinger.com)

Blokes You Can Trust
The rather extraordinary tale of the Australian band the Cosmic Psychos. They are probably the last band I would have thought should deserve a documentary, but after watching it I am glad someone had the insight to do it. Weightlifter, farmer and bassist Ross Knight gets the award for most brutal honesty ever in a documentary. (cosmic psychos.com.au)

Blue Jasmine
It is extremely humorous and obviously clueless that Woody Allen thinks that a formerly wealthy New Yorker would move to San Francisco after she loses all her money. However **Blue Jasmine** could have taken place in any town. San Francisco as a city plays no role in this film. Jasmine's inability to deal with what she has caused, or face up to reality, is what makes this an interesting film. It is a fascinating and depressing look at a women's declension.

A Band Called Death
Inspirational for the fact that they passed on a chance at success because they decided they'd rather keep their band name, Death were an all-black proto-punk band in the early 1970s. They were smarter than most bands, in that they requested and received their master tapes from the label that dropped them. It took thirty-three years for those recordings to see the light of day, but the journey there is worth watching. (abandcalleddeath.com)

Honorable mention:
Punk Cocktail: The Zurich Scene 1976-80
I am including this as an honorable mention simply because it is from 2006. Otherwise it is definitely a top ten film. It played in San Francisco for the first time in 2013. Director René Uhlmann compiled this collection of live and candid shots of Swiss punk bands from film he shot between 1976 and 1980. The films were originally meant to be shown on walls at parties, but have now been edited with music and animation. The result is an amazing document of bands most people outside of Switzerland never saw. Some of those bands are Kleenex, Jack and the Rippers, Nasal Boys, TNT and Glueams. (punkcocktail.ch)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, % Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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RECORDS

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We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(BB) Brace Belden
(WB) Will Blomquist
(GB) Graham Booth
(JU) Justin Briggs
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
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(FS) Fred Schrunk
(KR) Kat Smith
(MS) Martin Sorrondeguy
(AU) Andrew Underwood

45 ADAPTERS – "Dress Well, Drink Heavily"

I like modern Oi!/streetpunk, but I have to admit I always get hesitant before having to review a release in this genre. At its core this music is simple music so when it's not pulled off well, it tends to crash hard. Luckily for me, the 45 ADAPTERS not only pull off this sound off, but do it as well as anyone has in a while. The 45 ADAPTERS have a more melodic sound that reminds me of the REDUCERS SF from a few years back. You know, more tunefully sung vocals without the hint of the WARZONE influences that sneaks in on many releases in this genre. The music is tight, the lyrics, while no Dylan, aren't idiotic and the overall this is one solid release. (JF)
(Contra / Longshot)

ABJECT PAX – EP

This record is a mixture of two styles of punk that I'm not really into: early '80s UK anarchopunk, like OMEGA TRIBE, and early '90s US hardcore, like STRUGGLE. It's very serious music wherein the message is clearly more important than the actual sounds, because aside from "Selfish Minds," which features a decent chorus and some cool post punk licks; the other four tracks on this EP are quite bland and did absolutely nothing for me. The vocalist sounds like he can't decide if he wants to be in a Boston hardcore band or a goth one, and it doesn't really work either way. The lyrics are well penned and tackle a variety of topics ranging from perception-related body issues to pedophilia within the Catholic Church, but at this point if a band doesn't have the chops to back up it's predictable politics, I'd rather the people involved just make a zine that I can more easily ignore. Not for me. (KM)
(Sewercide)

ABUSE – LP

Modern powerviolence from a band that's exactly as foriginal as you'd expect a band that picked a name that at least sixteen other bands had picked would be. Look, I'm the last person to get on a soapbox about the value of originality in musical endeavors, but this is just bog-standard from riffs to lyrics to presentation to fucking everything else. If you like "goes slow, goes blast-beat, goes slow again" hardcore like a baby having keys distractingly jingled in their face, you'll probably love this record. Everybody else would be much better served putting on the CROSSED OUT discography LP again to hear this style performed infinitely better. (AU)
(To Live A Lie)

AETHERA – "Without a Word" CD

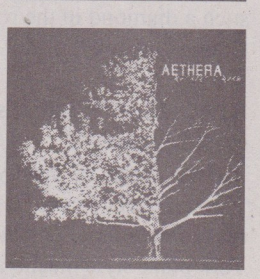
The last thing the world needs is another screamo band. They mix in enough BOTCH to not be a complete waste of time and I understand that some people like indie rock with chugs, but you aren't going to catch me at this party. (BL)
(self-released)

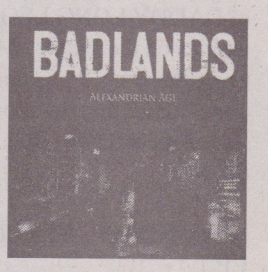
AGENTS OF ABBHORRENCE – "Relief" LP

Australia's long-running and criminally underrated grind masters return with maybe their best record yet. The no-bass setup instantly invites comparisons to DISCORDANCE AXIS (which are not unreasonable), but AGENTS OF ABBHORRENCE draw at least as much inspiration from early mid-period NAPALM DEATH's grind-meets-death metal approach, which naturally leads to the ASSÜCK comparison as well. Incredibly, this band (and this record specifically) live up to all those heady comparisons. I am hardly a grindcore aficionado these days, having been nearly drowned in a sea of same-y, tiresome bands, but this is something I would put on over and over again because there are great riffs, it doesn't all sound the same, the vocals are engaging as fuck, the drumming is actually supporting the songs and not just a guy showing off how fast he can play and, finally, there are actual memorable songs on the fucking record. (AU)
(625 Thrash / Psychocontrol)

AM/FM'S – "Damn Right It (It's A Saturday)" EP

What we have here are four songs from a band that sounds similar to a lot of stuff that came out on Junk





Records during the end of the last century. What this translates to for those who don't remember or never knew, is dirty rock'n'roll punk of varying quality. On their debut record the AM/FM'S pretty much whiff on pulling this off due to everything sounding lifeless and a tad to slow. This is especially true on the two tracks that kick off this EP. The first song on the B-side, "Blow It Up" is by far the best track, and makes me at least want to keep track of this band in the future. I hope the AM/FM'S rip live because unfortunately this debut EP doesn't do it for me. (JF)
(Radio Guru)

AORTAORTA – "Violent Meditation" LP

A meandering, moody slice of dark rock from Tampere, Finland, this is AORTAORTA's second full-length. Even as they hop from one style to the next—the brooding intro track had me expecting left-field crust, only to morph into some dreamily melodic post-punk—there's a masterful sense of coherence that keeps things flowing throughout. To their credit, the band isn't afraid to experiment within their undeniably dialed-in sound, a spirit that's most effectively demonstrated on the droningly avant "Medical Violence." When the sound veers towards noise-rock territory, it can get a bit pedestrian, but in the end they hit mark more often then not. It's always cool to find bands that feel familiar while lacking any obvious reference point, and AORTAORTA are just such a diamond in the rough. (WB)
(Ramekuukkeli)

APACHE – "Civil Disobedience/ Motorcycle Madness"

Two songs of catchy, cocky rock'n'roll. "Civil Disobedience" is a straight forward rocker with an abundance of mid-'70s New York punk-style macho attitude. The addition of DADDY LONG LEGS on vocals and harmonica on the B-side "Motorcycle Madness" gives the song a bit more of a gritty feel. It may also be that the production is more lo-fi sounding. Whatever it is, it works. (CK)
(Grazer)

AUTONOMY / STREET EATERS – split EP

Even though I was pretty stoked to see this team-up, this definitely exceeded my expectations across the board. I've always enjoyed STREET EATERS drum'n'bass antics live, but I couldn't be happier about the dark turn they've taken here, with a basement WIPERS vibe and the perfect dose of RUNAWAYS snot to offset the dual vocal harmonies. Likewise, while the anarcho influences are still felt, Carbondale heroes AUTONOMY show us a new dimension on both of their tracks, serving up a dreamy punk take on *Ecstasy*-era MY BLOODY VALENTINE on "Limerence (A Game of)," followed by a MELVINS-y PAILHEAD cover ("Man Should Surrender") that pretty much rules. Both bands refuse to get stuck in a rut, and who could argue with the results? No regrets, this is just a fantastic split. (WB)
(Off the Books)

BADLANDS – "Alexandrian Age" CD

I have to say this CD threw me a bit. I mean it's on Rebellion, home to all kinds of Oi! and "street punk." Ya know, the likes of the OLD FIRM CASUALS, BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS, RAZORBLADE, RAZORCUT and probably lots of other bands with razor in their name, and on their scalp. So a bit of a shock to find that this disc is basically a total dead ringer for BAD RELIGION. Musically, the vocal inflection, even the lyrics with lots of big words! Not quite as catchy, or quite as eloquent as "Recipe for Hate," but I can't see how that hasn't been the steady diet for this band. Even more strangely, there're several (pretty damn good too) acoustic tracks interspersed throughout. Indeed, of the ten tracks on this, four are acoustic… and bring in a slightly more Celtic tinge (no surprise there). Definitely for fans of SoCal melodic hardcore, as opposed to *Son of Oi!*, record label notwithstanding. (RK)
(Rebellion)

BAD PEOPLE – "Mean Talkin'" EP

Quasi-hardcore shit music that points to bongs being involved somewhere down the line. Reminiscent of any number of noisy, confused early 2000s bands who focused on stuffed animal costumes rather than, ya know, good tunes. (MC)
(Feeble Minds, no contact)

BASTARD NOISE / LACK OF INTEREST – split CD

There's a new entry into the power violence canon and… it's a bit of a mixed bag. I won't even pretend to know how these BASTARD NOISE tracks fit within their ever-mutating sound over the past 20+ years, but it's safe to say this is some very strong material. Over the course of four tracks, these veteran noisemongers (joined by BRUTAL TRUTH drummer Rich Hoak) span more disparate sounds and landscapes than most so-called "progressive" bands could hope to cover in an entire career. For me the big standout is "Denial Mastered," a haunting, synth-infused track displaying an atmospheric side that I honestly didn't know they had in them. It's frighteningly innovative stuff that's sure to please both new and faithful fans alike. Which brings us to LACK OF INTEREST. It feels a little unfair matching them up together, as LACK OF INTEREST—at least compared to their agile splitmates—just feels like an old, lumbering dinosaur. I've always considered them a B-list powerviolence act and I'm afraid that the hamfisted vocals and forgettable riffs presented here do little to change that opinion. The pairing of these two different-minded camps provides a telling statement on powerviolence and similarly extreme music in the year 2014: while the old formulas are wearing thin, there are still a few visionaries carrying brutality forward into exciting new realms and beyond. (JH)
(Deep Six)

BASTARD NOISE / LACK OF INTEREST – split LP

Two bands that have been documented almost to the point of making further reviews pointless. I mean seriously, do you need me to tell you that you do or not need this newest LACK OF INTEREST slab? You have either snatched up each dose immediately upon its release (good idea) or flipped mindlessly past them (your loss) for years now… but believe me when I say that this is some of their finest work. Fastcore / powerviolence that is forced out as much as offered up… I mean, what the fuck else are these dudes gonna do, right? BASTARD NOISE is in a different department, since you don't really know what you are going to get with each successive release—and that's why you need them all. This time around, BN bring BRUTAL TRUTH drummer Rich Hoak into the fold with predictably excellent results. Artz's high vocals are now an integral part of the sound, adding intensity to Wood's growls and the more metal approach to the drums is a completely new dimension. This session doesn't rely on heaviness, and comes off more like an icepick to the face than the painstakingly mapped out full body experience of Skulldozer, but it's a direction that I like. This record is intense and terrifying. So there you go—I liked both bands before I listened to the record and, not surprisingly, I like both bands now. (WN)
(Deep Six)

BEDLAM KNIVES – "Here Comes Trouble/High School Dropout"

BEDLAM KNIVES has an X vibe. Singer

Doug Kane formerly of SCHLEPROCK and the GENERATORS sounds a hell of a lot like JOHN DOE and his vocals are accented by female backing vocals. The music is fast and thrashy with a street punk meets rockabilly style. If I had never heard X before I might like this more. (CK)
(Dr Strange)

BENNY THE JET RODRIGUEZ – "Home. Run." LP

Aesthetically speaking, this LP looks awesome. It features a LP-sized photograph of the band's gear overlooking the city of (I'm assuming) San Pedro, CA and the back cover is a stark photo of the band members looking out over the port. Getting to the music, BTJR plays fuzzy, minimal, bouncy indie-pop with flourishes of organ. I'm not usually a fan of this, but their female (I'm assuming again, which is always dangerous) vocalist has a knack for twisting such an instantly memorable melody into each song that I can't help wanting to dance around the room. Seriously…if people would just make indie-punk that is more DIY and honest, that shit would always rule. Some comparisons could be made to CARRIE NATIONS, CAN OF BEANS, ZUMM ZUMM and NANA GRIZOL, but these punks are definitely standing on their own two feet. Solid fucking album. (GH)
(Recess)

BIZARRE UPROAR / CHARRED REMAINS A.K.A MAN IS THE BASTARD – split 10"

Looking back at MAN IS THE BASTARD after all these years is a difficult proposition. Their story well documented, and sound, which is so unique. On this release, sludgy hardcore with lots of added noise. This 10" (originally released on 7" in 1993) I feel finds them at their peak, which somewhat came to a close in 1995. There is nothing speedy here. Everything with a big low-end stomp as if they were playing powerviolence on a slower speed. Throw in a bit of noise and effects and what you end up with still sounds fresh. BIZARRE UPROAR were for the most part a noise group and honestly I always thought this release sounded like someone taking a recording of the MAN IS THE BASTARD side, chopping it up and playing it backwards. In other words it's noise, but it sounds like it's played by a band with conventional instruments. Noise and very wonderful noise at that. (MH)
(Deep Six)

BOOM BOOM KID – "Musica Sin la Intervencion de Cristo" LP + flexi

This is a compilation of previously released material by one of the most prolific and hard working artists out there. Carlitos has more energy than two bands made up of twenty year olds combined. This selection of tunes was put together by the SPHC label and released in a edition of 500 copies to support a BOOM BOOM KID tour. Great punk, pop, arty, hardcore shit! (MS)
(SPHC)

BORN LOSERS – "Movin' On" EP

RAMONES punk rock'n'roll from Fresno. The lead singer has a terrible fake British accent. The record labels don't say "A" and "B," or even "I" and "II," but instead "Knives" and "Bullets." This choice is central to their entire esthetic. The recording is terrible and the playing is sloppy at a couple times that you will absolutely notice. To round things up, there is not enough attitude to gall an elderly couple on their way to church, let alone save this record. Sorry dudes, but I'm movin' on (Zoiks!). (LP)
(VHC, no contact)

THE BRATS – "Be A Man/Qualude Queen"

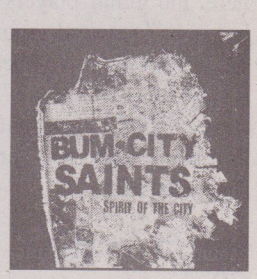
I didn't encounter the BRATS on that *Max's Kansas City* comp LP as a tike. I didn't own any of the Whiplash shit until recently either. But you can bet your ass I've been salivating over "Be A Man" since the INFECTIONS covered it all those years ago. What a goddamn killer! In short, this 1974 debut captures that moment where things like glam and a heavy ROLLING STONES influence could be shaken and stirred into punk rock, comparable to what NEW YORK DOLLS (BRATS guitarist Rick Rivets' previous band!) or HOLLYWOOD BRATS perfected. This one's worthy of being mentioned alongside those more well-known sleazoids, no joke. Too killer! (MC)
(HoZac)

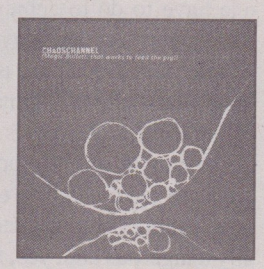
BREAKDOWN – "Runnin' Scared" LP

This cult NYHC band's second demo, along with their second set on WNYU's Crucial Chaos, has now been pressed to vinyl for the first time ever. For anyone not familiar: you get beefy, hazy guitars with metal solos, the utmost moshable of riffs, vocals delivered in a thick-as-hell NY accent and, like most bands of this style, time, and place, the whole thing sounds like it was recorded in an echo chamber. The record also comes with a retrospective and flyer collage, which is worthwhile without being overkill. (DG)
(540 / Painkiller)

THE BRIDGE / MY TURN – split EP

I tend to start my listens to this one with the passionate and heavy melodies from Belgrade, Serbia's the BRIDGE. They treat us to two tracks of galloping, posi hardcore that roar from start to finish. Brimming with intensity, the music is polished and melodic with standout guitar work from DEATH BY STEREO alum Dan Palmer on the first track, "Apocalyptic Preview." It's the closer, "Monuments in Silence," that makes it apparent that these guys are doing something special though and not just spinning their ENSIGN and SHAI HULUD records to oblivion. MY TURN from Athens, Greece take a decidedly different approach on the flip side; appealing to a more traditional style of NYHC with a thicker crunch and extended breakdowns. Equally as positive as their counter parts, MY TURN chug through two tracks that will have you bouncing around and sneaking in a little bedroom mosh. Good stuff. (RM)
(Goodwill)





BRIMSTONE HOWL – "Magic Hour" LP

These four lads from Omaha, Nebraska crank out an entire album of decently tight classic style garage rock. The recording is comfortably lo-fi, there's plenty of reverb, distortion is played off of clean parts for a nice effect, and the singer croons to a positive effect. While there's no virtuoso work here, the guitar players still have plenty of hot licks to spread around. I could nit-pick, but that would just be because I categorically dislike this stuff. If you're fiending for some distinctly un-modern garage rock, this record will likely make you very stoked. (LP)
(Certified PR)

BUM CITY SAINTS – "Spirit of the City" CD

Where exactly is Bun City and what does one have to do to achieve sainthood there? Makes you wonder. Maybe not as much as I wonder when this crap is going to end. Melodic Marshall stack guitar punk, with trade-off multiple dude vocals. On further listen, I guess they're singing about SF. I doubt these guys are old enough to remember when this now yuppie computer tech mecca was actually dangerous and, yes, full of bums. Maybe fans of STRYCHNINE, GOODFELLAS or RANCID would like this. Dunno. (RO)
(self-released)

CAN OF BEANS – LP

Worst band name of all time! CAN OF BEANS hails from San Pedro, home of the MINUTEMEN and Charles Bukowski's deathbed. Having spent some time in Pedro, I can say this band is a good representation of the region that they're from. Laid back, "chill," pop-punk vibes emit from this album. I can see them playing at a skate park or some weird, community art-walk. I found some of the lyrics to be pretty cheesy, especially on the song "Rainbow:" "You are the sun / I am the prism / Bring out the colors of the rainbow in me" but hey, that's more poetic than anything I could ever come up with. The singer makes a zine called *Porchcore* that covers the San Pedro punk scene, which sounds pretty cool to me. If you can get past the terrible name and are a lover of pop-punk, this might be for you. (VX)
(Recess)

CATHOLIC SPIT / GENERACION SUICIDA – split EP

My two favorite current SoCal punk bands together on one record! GENERACION SUICIDA have two fresh cuts of twang driven melodo-punk riffs with dual male and female vocals sung in Spanish, giving us all what we can't seem to get enough of. CATHOLIC SPIT continues the LA deathrock legacy with their track "Save Me," a batcave ballad of haunted distress. An accurate glimpse of what's going on in the land of forever sun at the moment, now only if they would just come to the Bay. (AP)
(Discos MMM)

CHAMBERS – "La Mano Sinistra" LP

An overall hypnotic, bass driven melody that builds and evolves into interesting non-standards. All sung in Italian, proving to be a language that has a strangely disarming effect, and is a passionate layer for these songs. The tracks are painstakingly assembled, each one serving almost as a ring on a tree, growing and changing as the layers pile on. As far as a near punk comparison can be made, *Mind The Drift*-era BIG BUSINESS through the best indie rock filter available may give some an idea of what kind of wonderland the record slips into. (RM)
(Shove)

CHAOSCHANNEL – "The Birds, Singing at Non-Reality/New Stupid Piece of Shit, Doesn't Fucking Work"

After a slew of delays, this brilliant record finally is seeing a proper release. I've had the version produced for their East Coast tour for quite a while, but this is infinitely superior, featuring a beautiful fold-out poster sleeve, predictably quirky lyrics and liner notes by *MRR*'s own Tony Gunnarsson. In line with the revolutionary *How You'd Never Been So High (But Then You Never Needed to Be?)*, these two tracks are noize punk chopped up, smashed to bits and reconstructed in the band's own image, driven by No.6's Watch-derived caterwaul and the kind of simple catchy riffs that end up stuck in your head for days. Two four-minute songs that fly away in the blink of an eye, though the peanut to modern technology "New Stupid Piece of Shit, Doesn't Fucking Work" is the superior of the two in my mind by virtue of its very SWANKYS stop-start lurching. (AU)
(SPHC)

CHEAP TIME – "Exit Smiles" CD

This is album number four from Nashville's CHEAP TIME. Eight songs of earnest rock'n'roll. Singer Jeffrey Novak's voice is flat and lethargic and he spits the lyrics out with suppressed anger. It makes an interesting contrast with the jangly, post-punk-ish garage rock the band lays down. Usually, CHEAP TIME's albums have at least one song that immediately jumps out at you as the hit. Not this time. This will be one of those albums that will need some time to grow on you. I am in no hurry. (CK)
(In The Red)

CLUSTER BOMB UNIT – "Bonze" EP

Fucccckkk, what year is it? I know you probably retired the string around your head like three years ago but you might just have to pick it back up again. Long running German raw as fuck crusties are back with another D-beat banger. Five tracks of crushing noise and primitive drums over screeching vocals giving off some serious GAUZE vibes. Out of all their releases this is probably my favorite. Get it! (AP)
(Power It Up)

C.O.M.A. – LP

Jaw-dropping avant-weird-synth-wave from a band that appears to be the predecessor to (or at least features members of) CHARLES DE GOAL. This isn't anti-music; this is beyond music. Sounds that seem to have the ability to reorganize your bodies innate rhythms leaving you in a state of unhinged and unchained deluxe ecstasy. It's plodding, it's upbeat, it's dynamic and different and sounds remarkably deliberate. The sound of the cognitive dissonance of a future spent waiting in endless lobbies… Sterilized and white washed until your brain starts melting. These tracks are the sound of your last synapsis firing. Weird instrumental parts that cut straight to your heart and filet it into a thousand precisely cut still beating pieces. The last song on here is the pop hit. It sounds like an avant cold wave weirdo band doing a POP GROUP cover with hooks. An awesome reissue (originally released in 1979) that I'm really excited about. (P$)
(Danger)

CRISIS ALERT – "Urban Decay" LP

Fast bursts of U.S. soaked hardcore in the eighties style. These folks hail out of Adelaide, Australia. They do a nice job at cranking out this sixteen-track blazer. "Pressure" is quite the tune. It must be that summer heat that would produce this Mystic Records style outfit. (MS)
(Resist)

CRÕN – "Low and Drowning" LP

Another dose of also-ran sludge metal via the Pacific Northwest, this is the kind of music I worry people will think I'm talking about when I say I love doom. By sticking

to the well-established formula of chugging, crust-ish sludge with clean guitar passages, CRÕN doesn't do anything too unforgivable here, but there's also nothing in terms of tone, songwriting, or vocal presence to set this apart from everyone else lining up to worship RWAKE and GRAVES AT SEA. A brief foray into their online presence informs me that these boys also "like to crush some cowboy-nachos and party at 'her place'." Wow, I am passing on this so hard. (WB)
(Rotten to the Core)

CRUSHED – "Losing Shit" 12"

Bashing through four ignorant and pissed songs about living life the hard way, this one sided, screened 12" is a formidable release by this young NYC hardcore outfit CRUSHED. By inserting just enough personality to the standard brand of brutish, mid paced hardcore we all recognize they've been able to serve up a respectable debut. When searching for comparisons, heavy weights like SNAPCASE come to mind, as they complement the stylistic approach, but CRUSHED are aiming to keep company with modern tough guys like TERROR, ALPHA AND OMEGA and COLD WORLD—whether they can keep up remains to be seen, but these four songs are a good start. (RM)
(Negative Desire)

DEEP WOUND – "I Saw It" EP

You know this record. And if you have one iota of taste, you know it's among the best of the best. And now, it's been reissued by Armageddon Label for your consumption, albeit with a few annoying changes to the original layout (band members' names removed from the front cover, insert shrunken down) but if you want it on vinyl, here it is. (DG)
(Armageddon)

DÉFAITE – "Comme des Rats" EP

This is pretty straight punk rock that's a little heavy on the rock part when it comes to guitar riffs (and the solos) but on the whole it falls kind of hard on the poppy side of things. Despite all that, it's pretty driving and doesn't really let up at all. The vocals are sung but with some angst, the playing is solid and there are some catchy hooks. The recording is a little muddy but that doesn't affect the listen too much. (PA)
(Mutant)

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION / NOISEAR – split CD

An absolute brutal split between Chicago, IL's (formerly New Mexico) NOISEAR and France's DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION. NOISEAR play a fast modern grindcore sound that's very discordant and somewhat techie. On this release they have an ever so slight death metal leaning but the sound is not far from their "Turbulent Resurgence" full length. NOISEAR has a unique talent in that, despite writing super fast, brutal and techie grindcore, they don't lose site of the song. Yes they write songs. Tracks are different from each other and memorable. The tracks on this split are amazing. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION is a relatively new band, new to me, and they grind like maniacs. They also mix up the sounds on each track. "Andrii Ryazanov For President" starts with a Swedish grind sound, changes to more of a hardcore track". "Un De Trop" has almost pig-squeal vocals. "Plaisir D'Offrir" is frantic and crazy sounding. "La Debile" shows they're not afraid to get weird and silly. None of their tracks are a minute long and the entire 20-track CD is fifteen minutes long. This split came out a while ago, maybe ever a year ago and I love it. (MH)
(Power It Up)

DIE LAST – "Medecine" LP

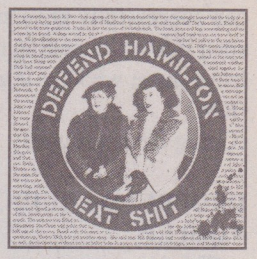
Well, I can't say that I enjoy screamo the slightest bit, so I'll try to be as diplomatic as possible here. This LP appears to collect tracks from 2003, '04, and 1999 from this Polish band. It's your typical emocore fare, from the quiet dreary clean verses with soft vocals that rise to full and loud choruses. Vocals are passionate, mostly sung on key in a gritty singing voice, but with no shortage of screams spattered throughout. Despite the deplorable genera and predictability, I can acknowledge the sincerity in this. (MA)
(83 / No Pasaran / Inicjatywa Pracownicza / Studio Fonia)

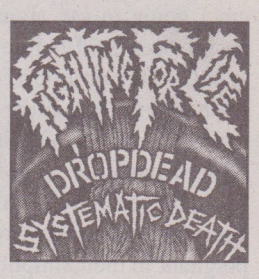
DISMANTLE – "Complaints" EP

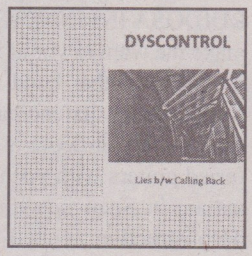
This EP from DISMANTLE is pretty good. It is a standard, run-of-the-mill hardcore record played by some decent musicians. There are a few moments that remind me of LEFTÖVER CRACK, which I dig (even though I don't listen to bands like them too often these days). The band itself is tight and I feel like this would be a fun band to see live. DISMANTLE may not be reinventing any genres, but they are good at what they do and can write some fun punk jams worth moshing to. (SF)
(Scumbros)

DOSES – LP

Since this SoCal two-piece band uses a drum machine and their music is a bit dirgy, an immediate comparison could be drawn to BIG BLACK, but there's also some AmRep influence in the spacious guitar lines, and some modern scumcore aesthetic permeating the entire album, which makes sense since I believe at least one of these dudes was in FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS. This is a fairly abrasive album in a lot of ways, but it's also surprisingly accessible. The production is pretty clean for a band of this ilk, and the talky, spiteful vocals shine through and carry the tracks. These guys are definitely on the "life is fucked, and so are we" tip, and the disconnect is incredibly clear on tracks like the speedy and hateful "Pig Gut," and the sprawling closer "Make Me A Man," with its uncomfortable, yet brilliantly confrontational lyrics (you can probably guess what it's about). The world is an ugly place kids, but sometimes a band like DOSES







can successfully channel the hatred and despair into a compelling piece of music that'll leave those who get it grinning villainously. (KM)
(Going Underground)

DROPDEAD / RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA – split EP

This is one of those records I love to get for review then dread reviewing. What the fuck am I going to say about DROPDEAD that hasn't been said before? Pummeling, menacing, brutal, prolific? The continuation with fresh new tracks nailing down the original of a long line of Japanese-influenced, American infused hardcore whose style, from guitar-leads to vocal style, that is often imitated, yet never mastered? Concise lyrics that are poignant in their simplicity, without obvious heartless imitation or contrived pamphlet waiving? I think you get it… Ugh, the three RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA tracks on the flip make me want to vomit with rage, so fucking sick. It's another band with impressive and solid releases that increase in intensity. Their fast-as-fuck hardcore is a relentless attack of furied guitars with vocals to match. The lyrics are in Spanish with the same spite and deconstruction applied to an elevated level of a personal critical eye—universal themes treated with the severity they deserve. This record wins on both sides. (MB)
(Armageddon)

DROP DEAD / SYSTEMATIC DEATH – split EP

It was a really nice surprise to know this record was even happening! Obviously, both bands are legendary in their own way, so it only makes sense to do a split 7" together. Complete with a black and silver fold-out sleeve with artwork by Sugi, straight-forward upbeat hardcore from DROPDEAD, and thrashing, burning spirits hardcore from SYSTEMATIC DEATH. This record is a must-have for fans of either band. (KR)
(Armageddon / Deathwish)

DRUNK AS SHIT – "Drunk Punk Thrash" CD

This is one of those records that you can tell exactly what it sounds like by looking at the layout (hint: it's a logical extension of this record's title). Scummy hardcore punk most likely made by aging alcoholics that's well-produced and admittedly energetic, but generic at best and cringeworthy at worst, and without anything to distinguish themselves from any of the other bands drunkenly 1-2 1-2-ing their way through an opening slot for MOUTH SEWN SHUT the world over. Oh yeah, and this came out on a label called... (DG)
(Ballz Out)

DYSCONTROL – "Lies/Calling Back" 45

This is fucking awesome! This is fucking awesome! That is the purist thought going through my brain as I listen to this record for the third time in a row. Imagine the more straightforward moments of MISSION OF BURMA mixed with the best of the early '80s melodic releases by the SST label. When the singer screams he even sounds similar to D. Boon of the MINUTEMEN. The only problem with this release is that it makes me want more! More! (JF)
(Sewercide)

ECTOPLASM – EP

Second vinyl release from this Gainsville, FL band. The bass tone on this and the first record is so distinct, and it separates them from similar sounding bands. The vocalist really channels Jonssan of ANTI-CIMEX with his delivery, and the band furiously charges straight forward through every song. If you like MAUSER, you will like this band, too. (KR)
(Distort Reality)

EMBALMING THEATRE / EXULCERATION – split CD

Here's a gore-grind split from Switzerland and it's kind of like all other gore-grind splits: there's a skull on the cover, one band is slightly more death metal than the other, and I'm glad that the lyrics are unintelligible because the rest of this review would be about how stupid they are. Both bands are more of the NAPALM DEATH school of grind than the INSECT WARFARE academy, but EXULCERATION has a more lively guitar style that makes them sound a bit happier, while EMBALMING THEATRE has an uglier aesthetic, which makes sense; the band has the benefit of being steeped in the modern grind tradition, while EXCULCERATION broke up over 20 years ago and these tracks come from their 1992 recordings for a full-length album that never happened. Some collector is probably rubbing his nipples over this thing right now. (BL)
(Power It Up)

ENTRAILS MASSACRE – "Decline of Our Century" CD

After a ten-year hiatus, German grinders ENTRAILS MASSACRE spill their guts (heh) with some new material. This disc is their 20-song *Decline of Our Century* LP and their sides of two recent split 7"s—with PROLETAR (reviewed this issue) and MESRINE. Lyrics (in English) are included for the LP but not the splits. These dudes must practice a lot, 'cause each song has many different parts, each lasting just a few seconds . To have a band like this, the drummer has to be fucking crazy, and that is the case here. I love GRIDE, who are also in this vein, but I wasn't as excited for this disc. They're good at what they do—chaotic and powerful—but for my tastes their sound is better than their songs. If your thing is fucked up, gnarly grind with growled vocals, by all means hit the 'TRAIL. (JM)
(Power It Up)

ENTRAILS MASSACRE / PROLETAR – split EP

An insane sounding grind split from two diehards that both date back to the 1990s. Germany's ENTRAILS MASSACRE and Indonesia's PROLETAR. Each band doing three tracks and a cover song (NASUM and EXTREME DECAY, respectively). The ENTRAILS MASSACRE is a beast of blast beats, unique vocals that seem to combine the gargling grind vocals with the shrieked grind vocals while punchy, blunt vocals and groaned screams spit over precise, fast delivery. Lyrics are skipped for a band photo / facial hair close-up, but I'll sleep okay at night with a good guess what a track like "Human Pancake" is about, as the harsh attack speaks for itself. *Sick!* On the flip, PROLETAR spit, gurgle, shriek and vomit out harsh vocals over throttling blast beats, swirling guitar leads and thudding chunks of punctuating heaviness. Recorded in a full studio sound, the wild and just slightly disjointed quality to the playing that makes their side weirdly intense. Lyrics are similar to Japanese hardcore lyrics with shards of poetic meaning left for deciphering. Ace! (KS)
(Power It Up)

EPICYCLE – "You're Not Gonna Get It: 1978-81" LP

HOLY HOZAC MONTH! Being from the Northshore of Chicago, I have always been impressed with this EPICYCLE, ever since I got their "Underground" 7" EP at Reckless Records for $1.99. Back when I was grasping at everything and anything "punk" related pre-1982 like all the true collectors, this EPICYCLE always stood out from most of their Chicago and Midwest brethren that mostly played sucky nu wave; that and Chicago punk uber collector BD made the bold claim that

"You're Not Gonna Get It" is Chicago's only true '70s punk anthem. I liked them so much I even sat through their über limpdick LP more than one time. Well now you kids get to discover it all in one easy place. (GB)
(HoZac)

EMBALMING THEATRE – "Unamused Rancid Flesh" CD

Horror-grind with lightning-speed blastbeats, metallic guitar licks and deep throat demon vocals. All the lyrics have tragic and/or ridiculous real-life events as inspiration, which the band seems to be either empathizing with or laughing at (or both?). You can read the lyrics with the explanations in the liner notes, which is cool. There are samples throughout and the tempo is somewhat uniform throughout. I'm sure people who love this sort of grind would dig this (MB)
(Power It Up)

ESTAMPIDO / NUCLEAR ASSAO – split EP

ESTAMPIDO play fast punk/grind with some memorable moments due to the humoristic nature of this band. If you are unfamiliar, these goof balls will write songs that fuck with everybody and anybody including yours truly: "Martin Crudo No Cabes en tus Bragas," is jabbing at my wonderful physique—my belly to be exact. It is funny. Would I really listen to this record again? Not likely. On the flip, NUCLEAR ASSAO is straight grind and not too interesting. (MS)
(Crit de Fastic / Hombre Que Mira el Cielo / Infeccio Underground / Truco Esparrago)

EUNUCH – "Castration" EP

Boring. Looked really cool but its boring. Straightforward, stomping garage punk whatever. There are a few sludge moments that are alright, but DIET COKEHEADS did it better. This isn't bad but it's not good either. Seriously, if you put a turd through a delay pedal it's still a turd. (MM)
(XO)

EXITHIPPIES / LOTUS FUCKER – split LP

A multiple armed punk Elmo mockingly stares at me from the cover, while rainbows explode from his stomach and a raver bead rainbow pacifier hangs around his neck. I open the record to find a Magic Eye as an insert (I've always been shit at these). I'm pretty sure EXITHIPPIES are just out to troll us, as a connoisseur of noise punk trolling, I approve. They fall somewhere in between a wall of sludge-y noise and tortured hardcore punk. Ending the record on some electro noise songs, which are not just totally fucked but totally awesome as well. LOTUS FUCKER is back with another frantic and grinding release of pure shit punk. However even at it's most basic it still continues to be innovative and catchy. The agonizing last track of feedback and guttural vocalized writhing has its place next to anything WHITEHOUSE ever put out. Any profits above wholesale from SPHC will be given to SEE YOU IN HELL to recoup the money stolen from their show in Oakland. (AP)
(SPHC)

EXORCISMS – "Love Gone Bad/Two With Half"

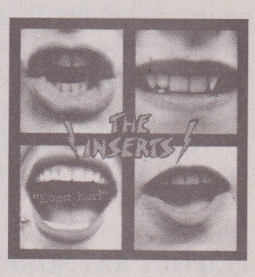
This has a nice sound. It's slow and bluesy with pounding drums and lo-fi production. The singer has a deep, soulful voice. "Love Gone Bad" makes me picture a slow-dance at Rydell High. "Two With Half" picks up the pace a bit then goes off on a noodley instrumental break. The songs are a bit too straightforward, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. (CK)
(self-released)

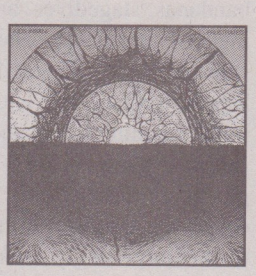
FIRST BASE – LP

We're a couple of songs in and I like the music quite a bit. It's poppy and catchy, not in a head-bouncing kind of way, but in a head-swinging kind of way, which may be a result of the subtle organ. It's got a great bubblegum quality, but it's still rock'n'roll. However, I'm a little concerned with the vocal/lyric combination. I think this guy needs to sort of man up a bit. He's got a girl that is "hard to read." Seriously, dude, get used to it. That's *what* they do. And now I find out he's "afraid of the dark". Jezus, man, get a hold of yourself. But the kicker is that he doesn't wanna be your dog? Doesn't. Does not wanna be your dog. Did you learn nothing from IGGY POP? This guy is headed for a lifetime of heartache. I now get why the band chose the name they chose. (KK)
(HoZac)

FLESH WORLD – 12"

This is some really good Bay Area post-punk. Not the dark-punk/goth worship kind, but more of the stompy early Rough Trade type. A mopier and less saccharine/twee Sarah Records sound with JESUS AND MARY CHAIN swagger. Hmm... OK, I know that might make this sound really wussy and lame, but *please* trust me when I say that it isn't. There's definitely bite and some Kim Gordon style snarl and mean to it. The melodies and the way the minimal guitar lines intertwine and play off each other gives me shudders. This is the kind of record you can sit down, really give it attention and hang out with for a while and "appreciate," or you could just throw it on and dance around. Musically, it's not a *huge* departure from BRILLIANT COLORS, the band that a couple of the members of FLESH WORLD were (are?) in, but there's a marked bit more melancholy to the dreaminess of this music. Some of the lyrics here are downright depressing—wonderfully so. "Church of the Flesh" and "Lost My Heart in Transit Thru the Post" are definitely solid mix tape jammers. The album art is gorgeous; the layout designed quite attractively. I also really appreciate the fact that the band actually cited where the images came from instead of being all mysteriously artistic about it. I've now got some old issues of *Camera Magazine* and a book about Swiss punk that I want to try and check out. Another great record from La Vida Es Un Mus. Recommended. (FU)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)





FLIPOUT A.A. – "Flipout Song" EP

Despite having been super into predecessor/peer bands of FLIPOUT A.A. like RAZOR'S EDGE and JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS, these guys never really grabbed me until I got to see their incredible live performance on last year's West Coast tour. These cats are all go all the time, and this recording does a great job of translating their live energy onto vinyl. There might not be a song on this record that'll really stick with you for a long time afterwards, but if you need a record to practice stagedives off your couch to or you're just into impossibly high-energy thrash-y hardcore, buddy: this is the record for you. (AU)
(625 Thrash)

FLIPOUT AA / NONFICTION – split EP

Oh the early 2000s: an abundant era for bandanas, stagedives, and most of all, blazing fast thrashcore. The two bands on this split recall those heady days from a uniquely Japanese perspective with sidesplitting drumming, scathing solos, and those ever-lovable Japanese gang vocals. You'd be forgiven for mistaking these two for one another as they sound remarkably similar, all the way down to the surprisingly doomy riffs that appear on their respective sides, including a SABBATH-inducing mosh part from NONFICTION that closes out the record on a particularly high note. Great stuff without the usual retro baggage. (JH)
(625 Thrash)

FUTURE VIRGINS – "Late Republic" LP

As far as "heartfelt" pop-punk goes, it is nearly impossible to get better than FUTURE VIRGINS. But of coarse, to many of our dear readers, that statement is equivalent to saying: "As far as tasty dog urine goes, it's nearly impossible to get better than German Sheppard." But for those of us who have a soft spot for bouncy pop music, this shit rules. However, by this point in their existence (second LP) they may have trapped themselves in a rather formulaic song structure. But, I suggest turning it into a drinking game. For instance take a drink every time a song drops out and gets real soft; only bounce right back, full steam, into the chorus. I mean if you're listening to this record, you're probably drinking a beer (or waiting for the liquor store to open) anyway. But formulaic doesn't mean boring. The songs are really catchy and fun, there's just a bunch of structural details and accents they deploy in vast majority of songs. The RAMONES did the same thing, so it's not really a big deal, right? Okay, okay I know what you're saying: "Cut the crap Fred, and compare this record to some bands I've heard of, already!!" So imagine if the BANANAS listened to *a lot* of BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN. It's wild and fun, and dripping with emotion. Is it a little overly sappy at some points? Maybe. Is it poetry? Does it matter? A stellar record! (FS)
(Recess)

GERK – "First Discography" LP

This is the discography of an Argentinean crusty, fast-core powerhouse without overtly doom-y or metal influence… and it's fast, it's cool. It's like straight outta the '90s with punk in the forefront and crossover licks when they speed the fuck up. You got throaty screamed vocals with occasional back-ups on here that def have the early "crust" sound mixed with Martin Crudo. Lyrics are in Spanish with English translations in the liner notes and are about consumerism, fuck-the-man, pollution, violence, etc… good record with some rather melodic moments and tempo changes to keep it interesting. I bet their live shows get wild. (MB)
(Crapoulet / Lord Bimbo / Maloka / Quien calla Otorga / Ravachol / Transphobia)

GLASS HITS – "Better Never Than Late" LP

Their second 12", more JEHU than HOT SNAKES on this one (the vocals are just so Rick Fork that it's hard to get away from that one) with a little UNWOUND feel in there. While their first record was good, this one is better. It's a little heavier, has more punch and is generally more dynamic. Maybe I just really like JEHU and want to listen to "Bullet Train…" over and over again but this record smokes. (PA)
(Snappy Little Numbers)

GRUPA 92 – "Slike Preteklosti" LP

NE! Records, out of Sweden, has been on an absolute tear lately. They have been unearthing and re-releasing some of the wildest underground Yugoslavian punk from the late '70s / early '80s. In their latest re-issue we have GRUPA 92 of Ljubljana (Slovenia). Starting in 1979 they recorded two demos and played many shows before disbanding in 1982 due to forced military recruitment. The band never had the chance to record a proper studio album, so here for the first time (aside from a single 7") is their material at long last available. This LP includes both demos, the 7" and a live recoding. The stuff is really far out there. It has some CLASH punk elements to it, but the organ almost dominates the mix, flipping it somewhere between new wave and post-punk depending on which song you're listening to. Sometimes even toying with ska riffs. The scope and creative freedom this band deploys is fascinating. It doesn't seem like they were trying to imitate anybody, only finding a way to express the wealth of ideas pouring out from their brains. The music and vocal delivery are extremely drab, while the organ is bright and driving. Yet somehow they fit together in a mutant-type mix. Wild stuff, really cool, and absolutely worth your time tracking down. (FS)
(NE!)

HAYMARKET – "Friendly Advice to the Poor" LP

Mostly solid French political, anthemic punk with some really good playing (yeah I know virtuosity isn't really a punk thing, but these guys really know how to do it well). Somewhere between NAKED RAYGUN and NOMEANSNO as well as other unexpected touch-points. "Men sado in corpora maso" has a bunch of great bass/guitar trade offs and a pummeling mix of ZENI GEVA and early '90s punk à la KORT PROSESS. Even the extremely simple and repetitive songs like "Fuck Your War" have something interesting to offer. Six labels released and distro-ed this, too. (JD)
(General Strike / Les Nains Aussi / Maloka / Mass Production / Perce-Oreille / Workin Man Arm Yourself)

HENRY FONDA – "Deutschland, Du Täter!" LP

The power-violence / fast-core band with a silly name tradition continues. These five Berlin nutters (nussers?) put out a crazy die cut cover in a mysterious varsity letter cut out. Then inside the LP it parodies/tributes SSD's first album—except here they're running up the German capital steps in jackets that have power-violence, SPAZZ, MAN IS THE BASTARD's skully and CHARLES BRONSON on them. It looks like a straight-edge album but I don't think any of their lyrics are about it. These guys play torrents of speed that are somewhere around CHARLES BRONSON, SPAZZ (especially with the very Dan Lactose-ian vocals) and LEFT FOR DEAD and a bit of firstwave of metal-core breaks (more *Inside Front* zine than the side stage of OzzFest). "Heute ist der Abgrund von Morgen" is really catchy with some call and response vocals. Although, they throw a real curve with the weird "Tragedy meets

late-'90s screamo" in "Not Your Motor." An odd, but interesting record. I wonder if they have an "aerobics-core" side band called JANE FONDA. (JD)
(Nerdcore)

HOLLYWOOD MASSAGE VIBRATION – "The Great Adventure of Heroic Mind Voyager" EP + CD

This Japanese band and this release are downright odd. First you get a 7" and CD as one release. Three tracks on the 7" and six on the CD with two of the 7" tracks also on the CD. Next the band is all over the place musically. A little rock'n'roll. A little punk. A little pop punk. A little discordant rock. A little dub. A little scronky no wave guitar. So much so it took me a couple listens to warm up to them. The first track has melodic jangly clean guitar and a bass player filling all the empty spaces. The second half of the track takes us on a discordant walk, then back to a choppy clean almost no wave guitar. "Trouble Punk" is frantic and speedy and goes through a number of changes. This is probably my favorite track. Track three has simple guitar that wanders and the singer rambles. But then we get a taste of punk, which builds and builds. Too bad I can't stand the vocals on this track. The melodic indie rock sounding second half of the track is driving me up the wall. "Ass Ass In" is dubby, noisy art rock and includes a harmonica. "Ass Ass Dub" is full on dub. But they do throw a noisy racked in the middle. Sounds like a dub version of the previous track. "Babylon" groove is making me sick to my stomach. Sounds like bad rave-up rock'n'roll. Vocals are not grabbing me again. This track is a cover of a LÄ-PPISCH song. (MH)
(Love Over Voltage)

HOOPER – "How to Become A Ghost" LP

This kind of melodic, dude stuff doesn't really do it for me. To be honest, if it were played a little faster, and if the vocals had any energy at all, this would go over well with the NO IDEA crowd, but it just seems to be lacking a lot of oomph! One cool thing is that in one song, it sounds like the singer is saying "Do you have an erection?" a few times, and that's pretty funny. Lyrics included. (DZ)
(Snappy Little Numbers)

HOUSEHOLD – "Elaines" EP

Undulating currents of layered vocal melodies alternate with more minimalist straightforward parts into a wholly drinkable brew that goes down so smoothly it's easy to not pick up on the complexities. Not only do the parts alternate between complex and minimal, but as the B-side starts to spin, the tempos alternate as well… carrying you, the listener, into the B-side on a pillow of sound that seems so comfortable that it's hard to believe it's not Xanax induced. That comfort doesn't necessarily stem from an innate familiarity with the sound more with the ease with which the parts seem to gel and pop. Which is a characteristic that a lot of good bands seem to share; the ability to make something difficult (conjuring any manner of complex crucial vibes) sound easy. If I were to try to distill the sound down into a basic but accurate oversimplification I would say GRASS WIDOW meets the URINALS, but this carves out it's own niche… and it's bangin'. (P$)
(Dull Knife)

THE HUSBANDS – "Patty Waters" CD

A pile of fuzz with an errant keyboard riff here and there—the whole thing comes off as lurching and pained. You can't tell shit from shit and it sounds like a dirty basement on a boom box but, you know, these things I like. (MM)
(self-released)

THE INSERTS – "Komm Her" EP

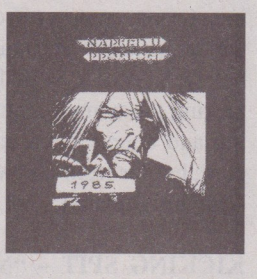
Four lovely ladies from Germany playing stripped down guitar punk rock. Lots of blonde hair, blue eyes, denim vests and I'll resist my natural urge to make Aryan or Nazi jokes. What really makes this record is the raw up-front no-frills guitar sound maybe similar to the SHOP FRONTS. The first song is all in German and better than the other. I can't help but get off on some Teutonic female shouting over some raw ass sounding punk. Maybe it's all those Ilsa movies I saw as a child. "Run" has way too stupid lyrics for me to take seriously. "Fire" has the singer hitting some Kathleen Hanna levels. Mostly über good. (RO)
(Hundemann)

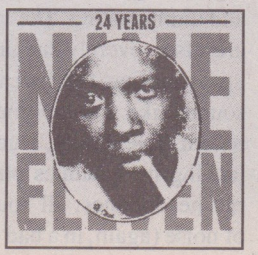
INSIDIOUS PROCESS – LP

Well here's another Swedish D-beat band that rules. I'm sure that there are bad Swedish D-beat bands out there, but lately they have been overshadowed by killer shit; like this record out of Göteborg. I remember this band as being the better side of their split with AV-FART 66 a while back, and they nail it again with this one. The music is heavy as fuck with chunky riffs, and a thick, caustic guitar tone that is second nature to a competent metallic crust band. Vocals are mainly screamed by a very angry-sounding woman, with occasional guttural backups and quieter, spoken parts where the band brings it down a bit from the brutal assault that is the rest of the record. Competent guitar work with riffs that don't sound like every other crust band and a few flourishes to add character over a solid rhythm-section that bashes every song out with intensity. Recommended for D-beat heads. (BL)
(Aborted Society / Not Enough)

JAILBIRD Y – "UMS" EP

Every once in a while, maybe like three times in the past five years or something I get a record for review where I spend the whole time staring at the record player wide eyed and jaw dropped. This is so amazing I think I'm having a panic attack. It starts out in this total jazz drugs chaos that's some kind of space between mutant disco and noise and everything is happening at once. It almost sounds like three or four amazing songs





just layered on top of each other. The vocals manage to have input from rage growls, soft singing and bratty chants all at the same time. The instrumentation keeps as close is it can to some kind of CONTORTIONS freak disco funk while being the cleanest chaos I've heard in a while. The second track switches over to some harsh drone out of nowhere but it all makes perfect sense. Like being at a nuts party where everyone's talking and then you go outside and it's just silence and moonlight. This is so genius. The second side pales in comparison but I kind of feel like almost anything would, it dives back into the freak disco funk arena but then has these weird melodic parts that verge into like RITES OF SPRING or something and I'm kind of like, "what the fuck are you doing?" but it's still killer. Also there is this hilarious chill acoustic guitar riff at the very end, I'm pretty sure I laughed out loud. My mind is blown, my mind is blown. (MM)
(Love Over Voltage)

KAVIAR SPECIAL – LP

France's KAVIAR SPECIAL sounds just like all the other BLACK LIPS cookie-cutter copyists dotting the European countryside in the last decade or so. There are legions of these bands and the only way any of them have managed to distinguish themselves is to inject some creepy, off-center sounds amidst the moustaches and gang vocals. Unfortunately, KAVIAR SPECIAL plays it straight, lacking the oomph required in the songwriting and energy departments. Not a bad record, but far from noteworthy. (MC)
(Howlin' Banana)

KICKING SPIT – "Negative Feedback" LP

This record may be one of the more trying listens of tenure here at *MRR*. This New Brunswick, NJ trio's blend of region rock, (hair) metallic guitar shredding, and grunge sit very poorly with me. To top the record off, the vocals are slathered in reverb and echo. The effect is such that it sounds as if the singer is in a different part of an empty steel structure than the microphone is, and it is not pleasing. Although it may be a blessing in disguise, since the lyrics are so trite and uninteresting. The mixing and mastering are also severely lacking. The record ends up assaulting the listener, and I know that sounds like a compliment, but this is a pop record. Eventually, I got tired, as one song lacking in dynamics phased into another in my headphones, all sounding like one wall of noise (again, in a bad way). Unfortunately, the only songs I came close to enjoying were placed near the end of the record. By the time they came around I could only hope for the music to end. Perhaps this band wanted to be DINOSAUR JR. meets DILLINGER 4, but instead they wound up sounding like ALICE IN CHAINS meets TILTWHEEL. (LP)
(Don Giovanni)

KIDS INSANE – "Frustrated" EP

These kids play accessible hardcore with a full, thick sound. I prefer their more straightforward style, like the catchy and danceable first half of "28.12.2012." At their best they have some strong, swinging parts, but every track mixes things up and not usually for the better. The touch of melody and pleasant singing did not help. Just like much writing benefits from editing, less could have been more here. In terms of the lyrics—I'm not a person who thinks a band from Israel has an obligation bands from other rich nations don't to address the political situation where they're from, but I liked the way these kids do—"It's not that complicated, you fuckin' love to hate 'em… You're on a patriotic power trip… I'm not buyin' in…" (JM)
(Goodwill / Take It Back)

KOMPLIKATIONS – "Poverty" LP

Here we have three Germans playing some very stiff synth-rock. Aspects of their sound harp back to the likes of the SCREAMERS (but without the chaos), or DEVO (but without the wackiness). Feels very rigid and… well… German. All the songs are in the "man vs. himself" style of lyric writing. The lyrics deal almost exclusively with feeling lost, lonely, poor and bored. Very dark, bleak and devoid of emotion. You could set your watch to this album. (FS)
(Rock$tar)

KOROVA – "Tragic City Summer Blues Pt. 1/Divorced From Humanity"

Full disclosure: I already know I like this band. I have heard them before and appreciate their genuinely unique approach to writing and playing hardcore punk. And they were from Alabama, so respect, because shit is harder there. This release is a posthumous lathe cut, and without getting into a deeper monologue about the ever-increasing pervasiveness of ridiculously limited releases (even ones for posterity, like this one), I will just say that this is awful. It sounds terrible. This could be heavy metal from a recorded from an FM radio station four counties over on a rainy night for all I know, because the reproduction is so bad it is offensive. This is not the band's fault, but *fukk*, do you really want people to remember your band like this?! I refuse to remember KOROVA like this, and for once I will say that I'm glad that there are only 29 copies of this release… and I hope the cheese dick making these asspiss quality lathe cuts gets run the fukk out of town. (WN)
(self-released)

LAST CHAOS / VAARALLINEN – split EP

This admirably international effort joins bands from Australia and Singapore with Aussie and American labels to bring you one of the best split EPs of late 2013. LAST CHAOS have been hit-or-miss for me in the past, but the epic Sweden-meets-UK82 bluster of "Mangods" hooked me from the very opening chords, and the mid-paced "Horrors" has a structure and overall sound that recalls the first TRAGEDY LP. I like this material a ton more than their first EP, and I hope they continue mining this style. On the flip, VAARALLINEN blow shit up with their patented Southeast Asian Finn-core. I dunno if this higher quality suits them as well as the rough-edged chaos of the demo or flexi, but the material is still spot-on, high-energy RIISTETYT/KAAOS/BASTARDS noize, with perhaps a hint more melody than their earlier efforts evidenced. Quality shit all around, a total must-have split. (AU)
(Havoc / Nuclear Blood)

THE LAST CONSPIRATORS – "A Celebration of Fury" CD

Seven-track effort of revolutionary rock'n'roll. Well, I think it's revolutionary. The artwork (font and stars and stuff) would make it appear so, and the song titles (no lyrics printed, alas) sound suitably stirring—"No Time for Egos," "Radio Warfare," "Last One Standing," the title track etc. etc. Musically, they're in that BLASTERS, later period X rock('n'roll) vein. Lots of tremolo, and the slower efforts pay more than a nod to ELVIS. Tis growing on me, for sure. (RK)
(self-released)

LAST WORDS – LP

Here is some earnest straightedge female-hardcore from Raleigh, North Carolina for people who are tired of formulaic genre bands. The music is mid-tempo to faster hardcore with a nod to youth crew and punk rock, that stays pretty furious throughout the record. The fast parts are using old '80s punk and hardcore sounding chord progressions and playing them faster with quick changes

for circle-pit parts, then snapping into a mosh-y, but slightly atonal, breakdown before speeding up again. The slower parts are often bass-heavy with vocals slowly growled over the riffs. The band sounds young and willing to pull in influence from all over the place. With a thrashy lead guitar part here and a fun party groove during a breakdown there, they aren't afraid to do their own thing but retain an aggressive stance throughout the record. The lyrics seem to come from personal experiences and are a defiant take on relationships and substance abuse. I would guess that LAST WORDS take the straightedge thing pretty seriously, but I didn't feel too judged despite writing this review while high. (BL)
(To Live A Lie)

LIBYANS – "Expired Language" LP

With a few exceptions, I feel like if you've heard one LIBYANS song, you've heard them all, and this LP sounds like the last two. Sure, they throw in a WIPERS-inspired part here or there, and there is clearly passion, anger, and intelligence in Liz's voice and lyrics (which does take on a somewhat snottier affect this time around), but it's the same fast or mid-paced structure-less songs that I feel blur together as a record. They're a great live band, have a decent sound, and could write memorable songs if they chose their best riffs, wrote songs with direction, and put out records with focus. (DG)
(Sorry State)

LION'S LAW – "Lafayette/Don't Give a Damn"

Here are two tracks from Parisian Oi! outfit LION'S LAW, one a mid-tempo anthem to Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette who fought for America in the Revolutionary war and was also the leader of the Garde Nationale during the French Revolution, and the other track a faster chorus vocal-ed fuck-off to all and any who judge these skins. There are melodic parts, simple yet great guitar leads, creative and climbing bass lines and straightforward solid drumming. The lead vocals are gravelly and mean, but still passion filled. I know punks who aren't entrenched in this particular scene are highly skeptical of new Oi! (yet they *love* the TEMPLARS), but this is good. The lyrics are sung n English, and admittedly sound rad with their accent, but I would love to hear some of their stuff in French. If you want some new stuff that pays homage to the classic old stuff, this is your jam. (MB)
(Longshot)

LOOTERS – "Fall Alone/Looters"

Pretty good, guitar rawk/stoner rock (sans the doom elements) that sounds very late-'90s, albeit a bit a bordering on bar rock. Flying somewhere around FU MANCHU, the HELLACOPTERS, and MONSTER MAGNET. Nothin' fancy, nothing too special, but not awful. Title track has an above-par guitar and vocal sound and a shit ton of solos. Not punk *whatsoever* and granted, it'll probably be in a video game or shitty movie soundtrack in no time. Yet unlike some dopes that play this stuff (*ahem* RED FANG) they get it right without being tremendously annoying. Not to be confused with the old SF band or the one from *Ladies and Gentlemen, the Fabulous Stains*. (JD)
(Full Tilt)

LOS DOS HERMANOS – "Bourbon, Blood and Seafood" LP

LOS DOS HERMANOS, with this LP, have managed to produce the single most flagrant rip-off of THEE OH SEES or TY SEGALL that I've ever heard. 'Nuff said. (MC)
(Howlin' Banana)

LOW CHARGE – "Charge Low" EP

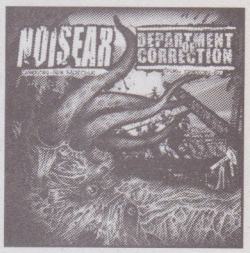
Blown-out hardcore from Philly that sounds like it takes strong cues from both the Toxic State scene to their north as well as the '90s crusty hardcore (especially in the riffing and what sounds like down-tuned guitars on some songs) that left its mark on DEATHRATS and STATE VIOLENCE, from whom this band shares a member. The glass-in-throat vocals sound like they're coming from someone swinging a lamp, and the songs vary in merit a bit, but the sheer rage compensates for when the riffs are a bit flat, and when they're good they're damn good. One odd thing I noticed is that for having gotten such a raw, in-the-red recording, the mastering sounds too quiet for some reason, as the recording has the potential to leap off the fucking turntable, but something about it sounds too contained on record. I imagine this is not the case with their live show. (DG)
(Mandible)

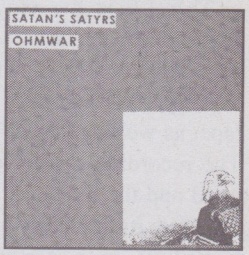
THE MANDATES – LP

Without sounding anything like early BOOMTOWN RATS or RADIATORS FROM SPACE or any of those style early power pop bands, this one takes me right back there. Even the VAPORS come to mind. Seriously, it wouldn't take much to talk me into believing that this came out in 1978. The sound, the production, the song writing, it all sounds like it could have come from way back when. Some folks will inevitably read this as criticism. It wasn't intended that way, not at all. More recently, this is reminiscent of bands like RED PLANET, if you happen to remember them. If you like your power pop full of catchy hooks and don't mind bouncing your head for extended periods of time, this one is for you. I know it works for me. (KK)
(Mammoth Cave)

METRO CULT – "New Space/Ghost"

The dark wave of punk just keeps on crashing, this time washing up from Copenhagen. METRO CULT take the strong synth vibes of early X-MAL DEUTSCHLAND and marry them with some hard driving punk. Unlike a lot of bands that have more rockist goth leanings, these guys seem to be standing firmly as a punk band—a punk band with a synth. The drum-





ming on "Ghost" manages to take the tribal/rhythmic style so closely associated with this genre and strip it completely of any Stephen Morris worship. A strong first record. I hope they can keep the momentum going for their next (hopefully longer) release. (FU)
(Adult Crash)

MOD SUBS – "Primitive by Today's Standards" LP

This LP is the vinyl release of an old Richmond band, which led to the formation of WHITE CROSS, whose tracks recorded in early 1981 had been floating around on a tape, as well as three live tracks from 1980. The recording quality of the studio stuff is good and the live stuff is decent. The music is stupid, rudimentary punk with yelled, shitty attitude on the vocals, following the guitars for the most part—the shit is good. The title holds strong, but really this record's title should be *What Every Current Punk Band That Fails in Using Contrived Shock Value Wants To Sound Like, but All Fail Miserably as a Parody of Its Fucking Pathetic Self—Eat It*. That's right, this is punk as fuck and ignorant and it rules. There are a couple good covers on here and the originals are solid punk tracks. The liner notes give info about the band, some photos and a good anecdote to give you a glimpse of where this garbagse came from—a shitty place in the American south with a great punk legacy. Good stuff. Screened cover, oooooh… (MB)
(Beach Impediment / Steady Sounds)

NAPOLNARIZ – "El Negocio/Velandote"

One of Puerto Rico's finest and most experienced punk bands offers up a cool single here. The A-side is a scorcher. Set off by a stock rock'n'roll riff, "El Negocio" burns with fuzzy guitars, up-tempo drumming, and gloriously drunken vocal hooks. The flip benefits from the same raw sound, but is a bit slow and lacking in comparison. To top it off, the cover has a house-shaped cut-out on the front with a sketch of three skeletons drinking and playing cards, and silver paintmarker stars on the black dust sleeve showing through where the cover is altered. (MA)
(TPVR / Scumbros)

NAPRED U PROŠLOST – "1985" EP

Wow! What a fucking record! This is a real diamond in the rough, tracks finally put to wax after 28 years! Back in 1985, three youngsters from the small city of Vojvodina in northeaster Yugoslavia decided to start a punk band. Between that time and 1986 they recorded six demos with over 20 songs, six of which are on this stunning EP! NAPRED U PROŠLOST gained a sort of cult reputation, as they rarely played outside their area and only ever did two shows outside of Yugoslavia, in Warsaw, Poland and Szeged, Hungary. Their style is a mix of sharply perceived ideas and jarring punk energy—think PANKRTI, HUMANA DIKTATURA, MASAKER or NE! Records reissues. There's a visceral, gruff sound to the production, exasperated and angry vocals, mean and melancholic riffs and jumpy, bubbling bass and drums: I'm not sure if I should start dancing or crying. Something about these compositions scream discontent and revolution. I can't understand the lyrics, but both the one-sheet, the long text inside the sleeve and online translations give me enough information to understand that this band made these tracks with sincerity and passion, discussing politics, religion, wealth, nationality, class and other maladies. Stand out track for me is "Pogledaj," which really sounds like an urgent call to open your eyes and look around, and "Ne Prizivaj Bozje Ime Uzalud," a lamenting slow jam, with catchy chords, and a rather paranoid-sounding ending which echoes in my brain still! This comes in a nicely printed fold-out sleeve, with lyrics, photos and a bit of history on how and why Adam decided to released this lil' jem. Nice work; one for my ever-growing Ex-Yugo punk collection! *Hvala!* More please! (LA)
(Goodwill)

NEKROMANTIKER – LP

To be perfectly honest, I'm not really into bands in this "scene" or anything coming out of that incestuous family of bands like CHAOS DESTROY or PENIS GEYSER. It's too "me makey punky noise" for me to take it seriously, as it feels unthreatening and contrived. But I must say, in this similar family exists the WANKYS—but they're old, perverted, deaf and can be associated with any group of noisemakers and get away with it. That said, I don't care who these Netherlander boys are as their love of CHAOS UK, or bands from Japan that loved CHAOS UK, perfect distortion, interesting take on noise used, perfect 1-2-1-2, and '82 style bass, unintelligible guitar, gnarly vocals plus severe respect for 1980s Kyushu noise-core sound means I can get over my revulsion and listen to the noise—not the noise makers. NEKROMANTIKER use some weird sounds not usually dabbled with and as a gently worn veteran of some noise scene excursions I can get behind this use of electronic disruption. Kids, we have one of the better noise releases of the past five years or so in this demographic of obnoxious noise punk. In a haze of garbage mimicking garbage, this is some live ass shit. (AE)
(Bong / SPHC)

NEMESIS – "Gyou-Shou" EP

It's been some time—at least for those of us on the outside—since Japan has dished out some high quality Burning Spirits-style hardcore. With Chelsea gone and the rest of the old guard either retired or offering only sporadic releases, there hasn't been much to fill the void. Thankfully, that's beginning to change. According to my sources, 2013 was a great year for a new generation of Japanese bands, with THINK AGAIN and CLOWN leading the charge. NEMESIS from Kyushu are one of these newer groups and with their second EP they prove they're an equally worthy addition to the tradition. Expect no surprises; just four savage, well-crafted, and perfectly executed tracks reaffirming the enduring appeal of this classic Japanese hardcore sound. Keep it coming. (JH)
(Flower of Carnage / Ratbone / Solar Funeral)

NINE ELEVEN – "24 Years" CD

It's rare to find this kind of passion in modern hardcore, and it's extremely powerful to hear. NINE ELEVEN's heaviness is absolutely devastating, with tinges of melodic crust show through an all out emotionally charged experience. Tracks like "Face the Triangle" are apocalyptic and transfixing; hardcore disintegrating into a deliberate atmospheric pummeling, while the tonnage that follows ("Into the Storm") is anything *but* atmospheric—a churning anthemic attack that pushes the vocalist to the very brink. The guitar leads are often the focus, melodies rising above desperation, but the overall construction of the songs is what is infinitely appealing to these ears. Nothing raw or slipshod about a single moment of this release, France's NINE ELEVEN have sharpened their focus over nearly a decade and it shows on *24 Years*. File this somewhere between FALL OF EFRAFA and MODERN LIFE IS WAR, or just consider it necessary. (WN)
(Nine Eleven Conspiracy)

NÜ-KLĒ-ƏR BLAST SUNTAN – "8 Inch Lathe Cut Record and Demo Tape Recordings" – 12"

This record collects the bands two very limited (100 press of the tape, 50 of the lathe) recordings/releases from 2008 and puts them

all on one handy record. The sound quality is good, and the songs are some of the most interesting noise-y, crusty, twisted tracks I've heard recently. The guitar playing is out there as fuck. I just keep imagining Thurston Moore or Glenn Branca with dreads and black Carhartts in front of a sea of pedals. Its spaced-out noise is kept in check by massive drumming, tight bass playing and some sick straight ahead riffage. What's kinda weird to me though is that most tracks on this record are repeated. So the band put some songs out, then put them out again on a different format, and are now putting them out a third time? Well, fourth kinda, considering that seven songs are repeated. Seems a bit overkill and slightly ridiculous. (FU)
(Aborted Society)

OHMWAR / SATAN'S SATYRS – split EP

A limited edition split with one original and one BLACK FLAG interpretation by each contestant. Biker dudes SATAN'S SATYRS go pretty far out on their side, tackling *Loose Nut*'s "Modern Man" with a satisfyingly SABBATH-y intro/outro that descends into some fuzzy MUDHONEY garage/metal that does alright by Ginn and Co. This is coupled with "Was Ya Expecting Us?" an unexpected instrumental with a variety of sounds and some undeniable surf/exotica overtones. Pretty sweet. I'm downright intrigued by New Glasgow's OHMWAR, whose "Snake" is a satisfying slice of guitar-driven darkness, modern sounding but not without its own sense of atmosphere. Liking the subtle use of effects that don't interfere with the driving pulsebeat, plus one of the leads sounds just like FAUST's "I've Got My Car and My TV". Regrettably, their "Nervous Breakdown" cover is just kinda gutless, super indie-rock sounding in the worst way. Aside from that, this is a pretty decent slab, even if I can't say I necessarily get it as a total package. (WB)
(At War With False Noise)

PARACHUTE ON FIRE – "Stock Car" CD

This isn't punk. It's rock with metal and punk influences and more metal than punk. I'm not hearing a "hit" here but this isn't bad. Along the ways of FOO FIGHTERS, later SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, and MEGADETH. Lots of chunky riffs from these locals. More of a candidate for The Bone Metal Zone than *MRR* radio. It is what it is. (RL)
(self-released)

PERMANENT RUIN – "Mas Alla de la Muerte" EP

Holy shit is this record fucking furious. Pissed female fronted hardcore that jumps off the record and puts a knife to your throat. No mellow/posi Cali-vibes going on here: "Run your mouth and roll your eyes/ might end with a fist in your mouth." *Fuck yes!* "Corporal Punishment" not only has one of the raddest breakdowns I've heard in a long time, it also has some seriously dark, sexualized lyrics that I can't help but go back to again and again. It's like Kathy Acker by way of Tony Erba. Five songs, no bullshit. If more contemporary hardcore records were like this, I'd probably be *way* more into contemporary hardcore. Hell, maybe I am, and I didn't even know. (FU)
(Warthog Speak)

PICK YOUR SIDE / TO THE POINT – 10"

I'll start with PICK YOUR SIDE, a newish project from the unfriendly hinterlands of Hamilton, Ontario featuring scene vets who have put time into numerous reputable projects, including LEFT FOR DEAD, ENDLESS BLOCKADE, FUCK THE FACTS, and most notably, vocals from the almighty HAYMAKER. I point this out because the past has heavy implications on the future, and the collection of songs released on both sides of this split can be viewed as escalations of earlier work. PYS channel LEFT FOR DEAD's vicious tone while the all around tightness of the drumming and rhythm section showcase styles more in line with precision oriented blast beats that seem to come to almost naturally. TO THE POINT on the flip side is the newest incarnation of a Chris Dodge and Bob from Deep Six Records project. It's year zero powerviolence and much has already been made of the "caveman" vocals that bash and fight while the music rips and tears. Records are in short supply, but highly recommended for those who know what they're getting into. (RM)
(Deep Six)

PLAINE CRASSE – "Série Noire" LP

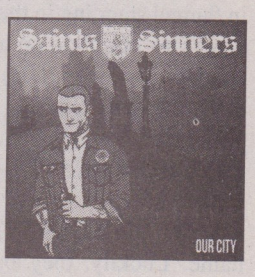
If my French were better (i.e. existent) I'd probably have a better idea what's going on here, in terms of the provenance of this recording. The best I can tell is that these songs are from their 2012 demo. They're worthy of being pressed onto a 45rpm 12". PLAINE CRASSE is burly, sometimes chaotic, sometimes driving, but always concise. The bass and drums dominate and the guttural vocals work well. The band's been around since at least 2005 and they've developed a great, distinctive style. The closest thing I'd compare them too is a less-direct OKKULTOKRATI. Recommended. (JM)
(Lustucrust)

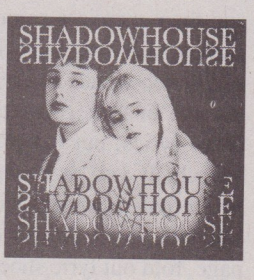
PLAN OF ATTACK – "Brisbane Oi!" EP

Ah, fuck! Straight laced skinhead anthems to lose your shit to. These three tracks have enough attitude, rock'n'roll and guitar work to make it all work right. The pace is kept up and the rhythm is infectious, a ROSE TATTOO cover doesn't hurt but the winner on this slab is "Used to Be," a mid paced thumper that recalls *From Chaos to 1984*. Vocals are supplied from SKINT front man, Barry, who keeps things gruff and firm while the music is choppy and nasty. I am very excited about this release and look forward to tracking down their full length on Rebellion Records. (RM)
(Longshot Music)

THE POLES – "Merman/Pest"

Mid-paced, rumbly bass AMREP-y noise rock with scream-y, reverb-y vocals. Their hype sheet says "post-





punk" but I don't hear much of that other than this is a good "rockin, heavy" band that's not really punk and sure ain't metal. Comes off like a *Bleach*-era NIRVANA or FAILURE by way of HAMMERHEAD (Minneapolis). It's catchy yet occasionally chaotic in the spirit of the unhinged sound that labels such as AmRep, C/Z and Sub-Pop often had. Which also reminds me of when *MRR* had the Seattle scene report header with the long hairs in flannel standing in the rain. I'd like to hear what they could do on a five song EP 'cause this is a good start. (JD)
(self-released)

PSYCHO SQUATT – "Tant De Crises" LP

PSYCHO SQUATT?! That is just a bad name. Luckily, they back up this error in judgment with absolutely solid French anarchopunk. I never expect this sub-genre of punk to be especially innovative, so I wasn't too surprised by the samples of radios changing stations between news broadcasts and old movies. What I am surprised by though is the tasteful use of a fucking *saxophone* in this band. Seriously. I didn't think I would ever say this, but the sax makes these songs feel complete, much in the same way XRAY SPEX used it. Their bass player is also a maniac. He holds it down where he needs to and then exercises some crazy fretwork that carries each song over the threshold. Beautiful French vocals and buzzsaw guitars round it out. I'm sure it's fiercely political and has smart lyrics, but I don't know one word of French. If you're into anarchopunk, this is better than most of the stuff I've heard in the last few years. It also comes with a multipage, fold out lyric sheet set up to look like a newspaper, complete with a horoscope, Sudoku and crossword puzzle! (GH)
(Deviance / LA Distroy / Maloka / Punk's Shadows / Rudy's Back / Zone Onze)

RAKTA – 12"

This is what a perfect record sounds like. Every time I talk about it I end up sounding like some blubbering idiot. This music is equal parts post-punk, incantation and psych—hook laden as fuck. RATKA is an all-female band from San Paulo, Brazil that seem to have come from out of nowhere to make most of the current post-punk/anarcho wave completely irrelevant. This is the next level in this style, borrowing elements from all the spooky classics, but adding something so undeniably new and unique that the game is permanently changed. RAKTA eliminates all sense of retro-ness to the style and come off like they just now invented the damn thing. The songs create an otherworldly atmosphere while still keeping your feet tapping. It transports you to this weird dimension that feels like it's trying to keep you inside of it forever. It would have been the *perfect* soundtrack for a Maya Deren film. The record comes with a red-and-black on white poster that only adds to the mysterious bruxa vibes that the music gives. Check out my Year End Top Ten list for even more gushing about this record. *Highest recommendation!* (FU)
(Dama Da Noite / Nada Nada)

RAZORCUT – "Gone Are Those Days..." 10"

Growing up, I don't remember the skinhead girls, or "skitches" as an ex used to call them, looking so fresh and smartly dressed as these two lovely lasses on the cover. Maybe they'd be missing some teeth or an eye. Attractive in a whole different way. Here you get two Aussie blokes and the aforementioned ladies playing modern Oi!. It's catchy combining street rock choruses with more rock'n'roll stuff like the BRIEFS or SHARP OBJECTS. Unfortunately like their clothes it's way, way too clean and pressed for these blown out ears. (RO)
(Longshot Music)

REACHAROUNDS – "Living in the Future" LP

This record fucking rules. This band is from St. Louis and they sound like the evil version of the MINUTEMEN. If you stripped away everything even vaguely friendly sounding from the San Pedro legends, and turned their politically contemplative lyrics into clever hate towards all people and institutions, you'd have the REACHAROUNDS. The music is incredibly abrupt, the bass lines are downright bananas in that Mike Watt sort of way, and the trebly guitar bounces around all corners of the vinyl with a biting confidence that BIG CRUX wishes they had. After listening to the first couple tracks, I wasn't convinced the harsh vocals meshed with the music, but then I kept listening and everything fell into place, and now I think the singer is the best part of this record, and delivers some of most perfect vocals I've heard in recent memory. This is music that sticks with you; the entire album is a scathing indictment of the world and everyone in it. If you need more convincing, here are some lines from "Sunday" that pretty much sum up the REACHAROUNDS perspective, "I don't believe in religion / I think it's a fraud / So I went to the temple and announced myself as God / Nothing fucking happened / Jesus never came, but your whole shitty world still went up in flames." You want this. (KM)
(Push and Pull)

REGIMEN – LP

Gothenburg punks REGIMEN have released a pretty damn good self-titled album. I am really into the vocals, which are loud and in-your-face but occasionally drift into melodic territory that is more earnest in nature. The track "Sociala Trycket" stood out to me, which starts with some guitar licks that are pure rock'n'roll, moves into some early-'80s influenced hardcore reminiscent of BLACK FLAG or MINOR THREAT, and finishes up with a thrash-inducing breakdown. "En dDg Som den Här" plays like an homage to melodic '90s punk but is quickly replaced by "Skaka Röv," a frantic and powerful closing track that slams everything into overdrive. The album art is more hipster than hardcore, which is a bit off-putting but entirely misleading. This is a fucking solid album! (SF)
(Gaphals)

REHASHED – "Code Black" CD

This is pretty much the definition of "ripping." Galloping metallic thrash that draws as much from MUNICIPAL WASTE as from the '80s, a reinterpretation of a tried and true formula from the Canadian plains. Vocals are spit out with 25 TA LIFE precision while the band stops and starts on a dime and expands on classic thrash metal without simply rehashing it (pun intended). Perhaps there's nothing new here, but the execution is stellar. (WN)
(Power It Up)

ROTTEN UK – "Bloody Hell" EP

Talk about a concept band, the name alone already gives you an idea what they're going for, but the clean guitar tone actually makes the songs pop more than expected. Roughneck, British-accented vocals echoing over the palm-muted riffs and mid-tempo drumming pounding along with plodding bass—this record definitely gives a complete UK82 feel. It even has it's own SEDITIONARIES-style lude artwork on the back. So punk. (KR)
(Black Rebel)

RUSTED SHUT – "Rehab" LP

This is so incredibly blown out that whole chunks of sound are obliterated. Definitely punishing/pummeling. Ceaseless pounding where everything is powdered down to

a cymbal crash here and there, some vocals and just death. This is actually somewhat of a reissue, or just finally arriving on vinyl from a ten year old CD. It's hard to distinguish one song from the next but somehow its totally fine if not better that way. The vocals are doing that sing / talking thing that is not an easy task. Sometimes to me all that sounds like is a guy fucking yelling at me, and, you know, I could just go outside. It's FLIPPER without the goof or BRAINBOMBS with the fucked upness turned down (on second thought maybe not because I started paying attention to the lyrics and my eyes are on a rollllllll). It's chaotic sludge, which is cool, but for reals this could be a killer seven inch because I was over it by the end of side one. Yeah, a seven inch would be better. (MM)
(Dull Knife)

SAINTS & SINNERS – "Our City" EP

Really bad (not in a good way) comic artwork. You get the skin dude holding a bottle with the crucified skin and crossed hammer tattoos on the front and the skin girl with the way too tight Fred Perry on the back. Generic. Poppy Czech Oi!. The singers got a raspy voice at least. They got a lyric that's like "I'm off to the skinhead jamboree". Fucking hilarious. Dullsville. (RO)
(Longshot Music)

SAVAGE AMUSED – "Mind Cure" LP

The best way to describe this band is "obscure classic", because they truly produced classic American hardcore songs that very few people were able to access, until now. Thanks to Mind Cure Records out of Pittsburgh, PA (which is also a very sick record store), there are a handful of bands whose material is seeing the light of day, reissued on vinyl and being made accessible to the punks. For this, we are all grateful. This release comes with a giant newpaper poster insert with tons of pictures and info. Get this, punk. (KR)
(Mind Cure)

SECRET SMOKER – "Terminal Architecture" LP

This sounds like younger folks trying to recreate the emo hardcore of the '90s. By that I mean that it sounds like they grew up on later era music and while they may be after SLEEPYTIME TRIO or 400 YEARS, it's filtered through NEIL PERRY or even more modern stuff. Yes it's frantic, it's spastic, it's sort of heavy but it lacks the feel or dare I say emotion of that earlier stuff. It also is a lot more pop oriented and has less of the hardcore that made that stuff post-hardcore. That being said, without the info sheet telling me this sounds like HOOVER (It does not sound like HOOVER), I may be more inclined to just say it's a modern band drawing on influences of the last 25 years of emo. It can be heavy at times but has a certain poppy element in the bass lines and the guitar sound. At times it's spastic but it also has mellow intricate guitar parts. Two vocalists trade off, both with desperate screaming. It won't stand up to that older stuff but is still a pretty solid record. (PA)
(Adagio830 / Protagonist Music)

SEX CRIME – "All Systems No/She's Got (No Reason to Dance)"

Second single from this Portland outfit, released by the band for their recent European tour. For the uninitiated, SEX CRIME is keyboard-driven punk that relies more on danceable darkness than new-wave sugar. The especially punky B-side is my favorite moment from the band so far. Too bad us Yanks will never have a crack at this one. (MC)
(self-released)

SHADOWHOUSE – "Haunted/Lonely Psalm"

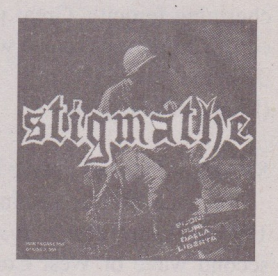
I feel like out of all the West Coast post-punk bands out these days, SHADOWHOUSE seem to be immune to the hype, I don't know if that is good or bad. Like yeah they aren't specifically punk influenced and take more from the CHAMELEONS than 45 GRAVE, but honestly I feel like they've been slept on hard. This is hella dreamy synth backed and guitar driven shoegaze goth. Invoking the dreariness, cold and emptiness of the urban Pacific Northwest, with delicately layered melodies reeling you into a whirr. They've grown so much in a year and I feel like they are only going to get better. Pick this shit up before winter is over. (AP)
(Gone Home, no info)

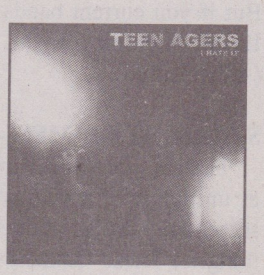
SIGNALS MIDWEST – "Light of the Lake" LP

It's getting pretty 1997 in here. SIGNALS MIDWEST play some throwback Midwest-style emo that reminds me of catching early shows at the Fireside Bowl. The easiest comparison would be SMALL BROWN BIKE, but there's definitely a bit more pop to their gruff. It's as if they found their influences in the discounted local band record bin in a Kansas college town record store—KNAPSACK/JEALOUS SOUND and early CASKET LOTTERY style hooks and riffs abound. Throw in the occasional Victor Villareal-esque noodle-y guitar parts, some more straight-ahead JAWBREAKER-ish pop-punk flourishes and you get this. For a dude who saw so many of these kinda bands around that time, I have to say this record is just as strong as anything from that era. Any song off this record would have been the mixtape cut off a Deep Elm *Emo Diaries* comp. Also, thanks for not naming your band something ridiculous like THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE & I AM NO LONGER AFRAID TO DIE or EMPIRE! EMPIRE! (I WAS A LONELY ESTATE) like so many of these other '90s emo revivalists seem to enjoy doing. Much appreciated. Good record if you're into this kinda stuff. (FU)
(Tiny Engines)

SIMPLE CIRCUIT – LP

Quirky and choppy, simple and catchy. I couldn't see these guys play a wild punk show, but I'd be pretty stoked to stumble into the bar they were playing. Slightly surfey at times, not unlike LA LUZ, but more garage-y, and not quite so dreamy. A little more slick than I usually like my grooves, but this is good, and I'll be returning to it. No lyric sheet, which is a bummer. I would have liked that. (DZ)
(self-released)





SONIC ABUSE – "Full Steam Ahead" EP

This punk act out of Munich, Germany keeps their songs short, pissed, and full of that '80s hardcore sneer that frustrated kids still can't get enough of today. They start off strong and don't let up with the fast riffing and angrily screeching vocals until the needle slides out of the last groove. Eschewing a more polished pose, the band rips through songs one after another with attitude and charming ferocity. Great job for a debut record, I'm curious to see what this band will do in the future. (BL)
(Munich Punk Shop)

SPAZZ – "Dwarf Jester Rising" LP

Re-issue of this seminal piece of work, 1994's *Dwarf Jester Rising* ushered in a second wave of West Coast powerviolence before the first one has even thought about calling it a day. Thunderous blasts and urgent hardcore fronted by dual high / low vocals spitting wit as effectively as venom… and then they slow down and it's like a bulldozer (remember, I'm talking 1994 here, and SPAZZ was a hardcore band—it was a different thing). It's impossible to objectively survey the world of bands that SPAZZ spawned (and I may never forgive them for that), but fukk this record is *still* amazing. (WN)
(625 Thrash)

STELLA – "Post Grippo Empire" CD

This is not an easy listen, which isn't to say it's bad. This is a mix of math rock à la PEE, emo à la early HOT WATER MUSIC, and art punk outbursts à la the MINUTEMEN. I'm guessing this might be more of a hit with fellow musician dudes and punks who like RUSH. Although I like the mentioned bands, well not RUSH, this didn't knock me out. But if you current bands like SYNTHETIC ID this might be for you. (RL)
(self-released)

STRAIGHT CRIMES – EP

This is great! The pink Xeroxed cover unfolds into a six panel poster. (Or is it screened? I dunno, it doesn't smell like anything…) These Oakland twerps hit a home run in my book. Perfectly slightly spastic! I was almost about to complain that I couldn't hear the bass, but I just found out that they are a two-piece, drum and guitar band. Hell yes! Lyric sheet, download code, and absurd artwork included. I loves it. (DZ)
(Smart Brains)

STALEPHISH – "Rock N Roll Revert" CD

Detroit-based rudimentary, ignorant, skate-punk with prepubescent sounding vocals that isn't bad, but it's not good. The recording is decent; the songs have a predictable structure… it's just alright. I'm sure the live (probably bar) shows are entertaining. with all of their drunk friends singing along and I am impressed by their obvious whole-hearted dedication to skating, punk and skate-punk, but this is mediocre. Lastly, I'm glad that Gator-lore is still a cautionary tale for skaters, but dude gets no sympathy from me. (MB)
(Shred to the Grave)

STRANGE MATTER – "Ennui Action Dissolver" EP

How the hell do you combine manic '80s Midwestern hardcore punk with later era-Dischord earnestness and a proto doom guitar tone and make it work? I suppose you could ask STRANGE MATTER, but I'm guessing the answer would be something along the lines of: "I dunno?" This is the most original record I've heard in ages, and when someone screams *"we only exist in radio waves"* (at least I think) you start to pay attention. This is fukkn fantastic. (WN)
(Dirty Hippy Barn)

STIGMATHE – "Lo Sguardo Dei Morti" EP

This is one of my favorite Italian hardcore EPs *ever*, so I'm gonna grade harshly. Let me start off by describing the music. The two tracks on side A, (which are flipped in sequence from the original) are bouncy and fast Italian hardcore tunes, but with a signature darkness blended in, mostly orchestrated by the guitar leads. So fucking great! The title track is *perfect* and has always been my favorite. Flip it over and you get one of the best results of a hardcore band doing a reggae song. The darkness even lurks through the reggae, which sounds ridiculous, but I'm totally on board. I pulled out the original EP to compare sounds, and the main difference I detect is an attempt to bring the low end up, but it kind of sounds like it just distorted the overall sound a bit. The cover is an exact replica of the original, and it includes an insert with lyrics in Italian. This is essential Italian HC/punk here, and although it doesn't sound as good as the original to me, it's way cheaper and sounds way better than the discography LP from last year. (MA)
(No Plan)

STIGMATHE – "Suoni Puri Dalla Liberta" EP

Italy's STIGMATHE released two EPs over twenty-five years ago, this being the first of the two and my favorite of both. These songs are so fucking good after all these years; they still drive me absolutely crazy. Melodic tunes with savage bite the type of anger I love to get from my punk records. Over the years this EP would turn up in shops for $1.99 and I would grab it and actually ended up with a bunch of them. Ok, I will quit boasting—I am just happy that folks can snag this one up at a cheap price now. (MS)
(Good Will)

SLUTEVER – "1994/Spit"

A brattier NU SENSAE? Two women channeling a sort of unholy early '90s KARP / grrrunge dirge. It's a pretty raging 45. I like that girls are recreating this macho era in their own likenesses, subtracting the testosterone cargo panted costumery and mouth breathing oppressive bro pit attacks. I imagine watching them play would be a life affirming event, but speaking as someone who was in the pit for NIRVANA / MUDHONEY / JESUS LIZARD I don't really wanna relive my early teen years in this fashion. But I think I am in the minority, and this band will scratch an itch that many are experiencing right now. (LG)
(Jade Tree)

TEEN AGERS – "I Hate It" CD

Pop punk with emo overtones here in a TAKING BACK SUNDAY and NEW FOUND GLORY way. This is pretty catchy and well produced. There are tons of bands that have done this stuff and these guys are good at it too. From Orlando, this band is new, and this release is produced by a LESS THAN JAKE and mixed/mastered by a DESCENDENT. So these guys are off to a good start even if they aren't terribly original. (RL)
(Anchorless)

THIS SIDE OF ANARCHY – "1917" CD

This CD certainly has no time for subtlety. Here we have fourteen songs of easily digestible political punk. Sort of the same way the PIST were. Political songs that are so straightforward, they actually become clique (or even worse, an unintentional parody of the genre). If you're super young, this could be a fun listen. But for all the folks out there who are no longer a fourteen-year-old with an AUS-ROTTEN back patch, this kind of

stuff just seems so obvious that it becomes boring. It is true that the government just wants our money (as one song suggests) but if you are going to be the 34,481st band to write a song on that topic, ya gotta give us something a little bit more nuanced. Although, if you are one of the many punks out there who spend a fair amount of time staring longingly at your old PIST tattoo, THIS SIDE OF ANARCHY might help fill that void in your life. And while the songs' delivery may be a bit heavy handed, these songs do rock pretty hard. (FS)
(Viable Utterance)

THISCLOSE – "1986-2013" CD

The band hews close to the formula established by our heroes, DISCHARGE, particularly their 1986 *Grave New World* LP. I've never heard that one, but I'd be surprised if it was as good as this CD. This disc compiles their 10"/cassette and their two 7" EPs. (The *Burnin' Anger* EP has two versions of the title track—only one appears here.) The vocals occupy a narrow range at the upper end of the register and the guitar can be pretty metallic. The 7"s are the winners. "Burnin' Anger" has a heavy, infectious riff which rarely left my head, while the other EP tracks are sweet and tight with (of course) simple, catchy choruses. These guys write good songs. The 10" material isn't quite to these heights but still works well. I appreciated the lyrics, which spoof on the genre while also embracing, celebrating, and critiquing it. "Our inaction digs the grave/ Passive nostalgia is the new wave... Submission to the institution/Cold consumption of the revolution." If you don't have the EPs, get this. (JM)
(Delusion of Terror / Our Future)

TOUCH – "Rachet" EP

An odd mess of a record from this Detroit band. Imagine SOCIAL CIRCKLE in a blender with some non-descript screamo band, and one of the dudes from HOAX in the mix as well. I honestly don't know what these guys are going for; the first three tracks are shorter punk numbers whose influences vary from riff to riff, and the last one is a harder more drawn out, heavy, sort of moshy but just confusing song that bored me. The band is tight, and some of the ideas are cool, but this EP is completely lacking focus. (KM)
(ZZZ Tapes)

TRUE BELIEVERS – "Accept It!" EP

Goddamn this shit is sick. I once got reprimanded for selling an OG copy of this as "punk" on eBay, so apparently this is not "punk" to the cognescenti, but whatever the fuck it is it is beautiful shit. Duh hit song on de A-side sounds like if T-REX was from Ohio and not a sellout major label floozie but a poor lowly acid head with two friends and a tape recorder. Christ you need this. (*you*, not Christ!) (GB)
(HoZac)

DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND – "Shark/Burnin' Sand"

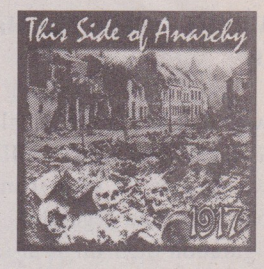
With all the cool records HoZac released this time around I audibly groaned when I saw this was the one I was assigned. HoZac calls it the "legendary 'canceled' second single from summer 1975", supposedly cancelled due to popularity of the movie "Jaws" (I'd really like to talk to his management about how / why that would actually be a reason) and despite the fact that TWILLEY's debut "I'm On A Fire" was a hit. The music biz will never cease to confuse. This is wimpy music beyond all measures. TWILLEY has a nice voice. The music is country-ish rock with a very '70s rock radio feel. Both are mellow love songs. They are catchy and pleasant enough and after listening to this record a few times I know some people will love this. I'm just not one of them. However rhyming "lonely" with "phone me" in "Shark" does make me smile. Would the six year old me in the summer of 1975 have liked this? I wonder. (CK)
(HoZac)

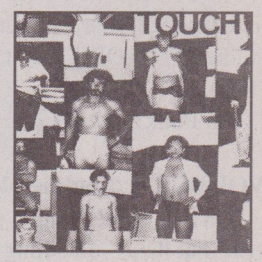
UPSET – "She's Gone" LP

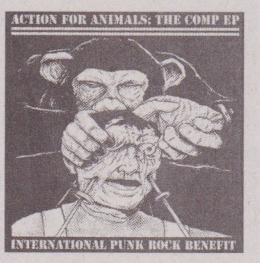
I'm gonna be completely lazy and tell you that this band has members of VIVIAN GIRLS, LA SERA, and HOLE and then I'm gonna be even lazier and tell you that this band sounds like a mash-up of all three. The songs on this album make me think of bands from the '90s, mostly the alternative rock bands who were one-hit-wonders. Half of the tracks are sweet and bubbly pop, while the other half are angsty and driven—although the faster tracks still have a sweetness to them that makes this indie debut perfect bedroom music for teens and adults alike who like their music on the sugary side. I was hoping for more bite from this album, but the songwriting is pretty good, probably because these musicians have been in several touring bands. (VX)
(Don Giovanni)

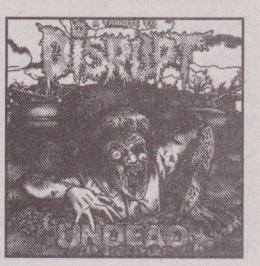
VEXX – 12"

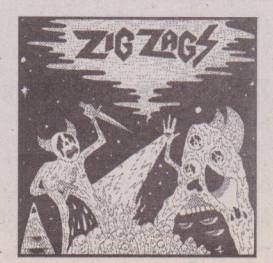
I love this record so fucking much. It sounds like a STOOGES record but not derivative. Or maybe a X record. Or cut the difference. The riffs blow my mind and the drums are amazing and everyone in this band is total electricity. This is just a really incredible punk record. It proves that something can be straightforward and free of gimmicks or totally freaky shit and still be completely exhilarating. Even the weak moments are amazing. I saw this band in a small town in the Northwest at a bar that was basically empty. The vibe was awkward and the bass was cutting out and the vocals were feeding back and still my mind was completely blown. At that point I had only seen Maryjane (the singer) in a performance art capacity and the fact they can create something so no-fuck-around is so exciting to me. This record is no bullshit and flawless and blistering. It's on my turntable to infinity. (MM)
(Grazer)











VIDEO – "(Join The) Hate Wave/Captivity"

Total Punk's winning streak continues with a near-flawless single from these Texas faves. The core of VIDEO operates in a whole slew of other bands, and yes, they basically rule regardless of whatever configuration their in. That said, there's something about this single that really worms its way into the win column. All spitting vox and driving guitar, recalling a brighter, more studied TESTORS. Can't lose with this one. (MC)
(Total Punk)

VOLAGE – "Maddie" 10"

This is some jangly garage rock moderne, but it has something extra to set it apart from all the other TY SEGALL disciples. The melodies are catchy and it seems like the band actually knows how to play their instruments. The songs are fuzzy and short, plus the vocalist reminds me of NIKKI SUDDEN. Also to note, this is a vinyl edition of a cassette VOLAGE released a year ago with a bonus track. (CK)
(Howlin' Banana)

WORRIERS – "Cruel Optimist" LP

There was a time in punk history when any melodic punk band with a female vocalist instantly got compared to DISCOUNT. I don't want to go back to those days or use lazy references, but Lauren from this band really does sing like the woman from DISCOUNT and I don't think that's a bad thing. (You can go ahead and peg me as a lazy reviewer). To be fair, it also sounds a bit like Lauren's old band, THE MEASURE [SA]. WORRIERS plays straightforward indie-poppy-punk with mournful, hopeful lyrics about personal politics, losing faith, books, growing cynicism and more. In many ways, WORRIERS picks up where THE MEASURE [SA] left off, but continues to grow and flourish as a band. Also, there's some completely sick-ass guitar work all over this LP. Good work on that. Members of the aforementioned and the ERGS, for those keeping score. (GH)
(Don Giovanni)

ZIG ZAGS – "Scavenger/Monster Wizard"

First off. Stellar cover art; I get so sick of bands not making maybe their only shot at things look even remotely inviting. Some pretty good stoner rock, grunge or whatever they're calling it this year. Heavy on the fuzzed out wah wah effects. Hints of HAWKWIND, BUDGIE, SAINT VITUS and MUDHONEY. Not too original but it'll rock your van on a hot day reeeeal good. My only complaint is the vocals are a little generic but that ain't shit dude. (RO)
(Who Can You Trust)

V/A – "Action For Animals: The Comp" EP

With 100% of the profits from the EP donated to the Pet Adoption Fund—the largest non-profit no kill animal shelter in Southern California, there's plenty of reason to pick up this 7" EP alone, but then an amazing *twenty five* bands blasting as many unreleased tracks are packed into this colored vinyl 7" with some of the best of international grind, thrash and extreme hardcore—YACOPSAE, BETERCORE, ENTRAILS MASSACRE, AGATHOCLES, SIDETRACKED, FLUX CAPACITOR, CONGA FURY, SLAPENDHONDEN, TO THE POINT and more with all spectrums of Lo-, no- and Hi-fi quick sound blasts. Similar to the classic *Blleeeeeaaauuurrrrgghhh!* comps, this comp has high enough quality of bands that you'll continually be checking the track list to see who's rampaging by. While I wish the sleeve contained more band information than facebook links, the spirit of this with a lot of punks and punk organizations donating both printing, energy and time has a really great community feel to it that makes this EP beyond recommended. A++ (KS)
(Rotten to the Core)

V/A – "A Tribute to Disrupt" 2xCD

I will totally cop to mentally shaking my fist at the coordinators when I pulled a fucking double CD tribute album out of my inbox at *MRR*. Can you blame me? Fortunately, it turns out that this is pretty darn great for a tribute record, boasting 59 (!) bands that cover a wide range of styles, from death metal to crust to grind to straight up hardcore. That diversity is quite appropriate given DISRUPT's groundbreaking work in fusing grindcore and crusty hardcore of course. A major highlight of this effort is the booklet, which eschews the usual "tiny pixelated square of art per band" approach for a short blurb from each about why DISRUPT is an important band to them, alongside a list of band addresses/URLs and a couple of interviews, one old zine interview from the early days and one contemporary one with founding bassist Tony Leone. If nothing else, this should be incredibly heartwarming to the members of DISRUPT, as this massive project has drawn together bands from literally across the globe to celebrate the legacy of a little band from Lynn, Mass. As for you the listener: if you dig DISRUPT, this is probably the best possible tribute record you'll ever find. If you don't, you probably won't ever finish reading this review anyway. (AU)
(Power It Up)

V/A – "Defend Hamilton: Eat Shit" EP

The good people of Hamilton, Ontario—a post-industrial Canadian city with more than a few similarities to Cleveland—seem to take great pleasure in dissing Toronto, their hip and sophisticated neighbor. Hence the title on this comp, a pointed jab in the eye of their yuppie-infested older brother and an homage to their hometown's seedy underbelly. You'll find all manner of heavy punk and hardcore here: the burly mosh of BORN WRONG, fast and spastic thrash from DISMANTLE (there's a Clevo reference for ya), PICK YOUR SIDE reviving the corpse of INTEGRITY (another one), and messy, lo-fi hardcore from SOCIAL DIVORCE, as well as a track from the recently-reformed LEFT FOR DEAD. Musically, it's nothing too thrilling (and the endless serial killer references are particularly tedious), but you gotta admire a city that knows exactly where it stands. Respect. (JH)
(Schizophrenic)

V/A – "Starting From Zero" LP

The same night I held the new *MRR* comp in my hand, I dropped the needle on this international hardcore comp. Leaning heavily on the youth crew / fastcore end of things (COMMITMENT CREW, REPROACH, CRUCIAL SECTION, VITAMIN X, TIMES TOGETHER, ECHOES, SALAD DAYS), *Starting From Zero* tends to get stuck in a rut here and there, but with 24 bands represented there is always one to pull you back out of it and get you psyched again. The bands I listed earlier are some of my faves, but the standouts are SEEIN' RED, BURIAL, EYE GOUGE, CITIZENS PATROL and SNIFFING GLUE. Nearly three dozen jammers, kids, get psyched. (WN)
(Crucial Response)

CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO • CONTACT INFO

540: chaosintejas.bigcartel.com
625 Thrash: PO Box 591, Middlebury, VT 05753, 625thrash.com
83: uta83@o2.pl
Aborted Society: abortedsociety.com
Adagio 830: adagio830.de
Adult Crash: adultcrash.com
Anchorless: anchorlessrecords.bigcartel.com
Armageddon: armageddonshop.com
At War With False Noise: 4C Richardland Place, Kilmarnock, KA1 3DH, SCOTLAND, atwarwithfalsenoise.com
Ballz Out: ballzoutrecords.com
Beach Impediment: beachimpedimentrecords.blogspot.com
Black Rebel: blackrebel.bigcartel.com
Bong: bongrecords.com
Certified PR: certifiedprrecords.com
Contra: Dresdener Str. 40, 04808 Wurzen, GERMANY, contra-net.com
Crapoulet: crapoulet.fr
Crucial Response: Von Der Mark Str. 31, 47137 Duisberg GERMANY, crucial-response.com
Danger: facebook.com/danger.rds
Deep Six: PO Box 6911 Burbank, CA 91510, deepsixrecords.com
Delusion of Terror: Emmanuel Jasmin, 299 Bintog, Plaridel, Bulacan 3004, PHILIPPINES, delusion.of.terror@gmail.com
Deviance: Steph.deviance@yahoo.fr
Dirty Hippy Barn: 2576 N. Holton St. (upper), Milwaukee, WI 53212, strangematter.bandcamp.com
Discos MMM: discosmmm.com, discosmmm@hotmail.com
Diseased Audio: diseasedaudio.blogspot.com
Distort Reality: distortreality.storenvy.com
Don Giovanni: dongiovannirecords.com
Dr. Strange: PO Box 9060, Alta Loma, CA 91701, drstrange.com
Dull Knife: dullknifelabel.com
Exorcisms: exorcisms.bandcamp.com
Flower of Carnage: flowerofcarnage@riseup.net
Full Tilt: lootersnyc@gmail.com
Gaphals: gaphals.se
Going Underground: goingundergroundrex.blogspot.com
Goodwill: goodwillrecords.net
Grazer: grazerrecords.bigcartel.com
Hammer City/Schizophrenic: 17 W 4th Street, Hamilton, ON L9C 3M2, CANADA, schizophrenicrex.com
Havoc: havocrecords.com
Howlin' Banana: howlinbananarecords.com
HoZac: hozacrecords.com
Hundemann: hundermannrecords.de
In The Red: PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, intheredrecords.com
Inside Music Lesson: insidesmusic.com, insidesmusic@gmail.com
LA Distroy: ladistroy.fr
La Vida Es Un Mus: lavidaesunmus.com
Last Conspirators: lastconspirators.com
Les Nains Aussi: lustucrust.org/Lesnainsaussi/index.htm
Longshot: 1301 17th St., San Francisco, CA 94107, longshotmusic.com
Lord Bimbo: fb.com/lordbimbo.distribudora
Love Over Voltage: loveovervoltagerecords.blogspot.com
Lustucrust: 42 Avenue Aristide Briand, 38600 Fontaine, FRANCE, stillangry@no-log.org, lustucrust.org
Maloka: BP 41 436 21014 Dijon, Cedex, FRANCE, malokadistro.com
Mammoth Cave: mammothcaverecording.com
Mandible: 102 Ryerson St. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11205, mandiblerecords.com
Mass Production: massprod.com, massprod@massprod.com
Mind Cure: mindcurerecords.com
Munich Punk Shop: munich-punk-shop.de
Mutant: mutantrecords.blogspot.com
Nada Nada: myspace.com/nadanadadiscos
NE!: nerecords.se
Negative Desire: negativedesire.bigcartel.com
Nerdcore: nerdcore@jesus.ch
No Pasaran: nopasaran.pl
No Plan: goodwillrecords.net
Not Enough: notenough.se
Off the Books: offthebooksemail@gmail.com
Painkiller: 7 Meacham Rd., Cambridge, MA 02140 painkillerrecords.com
Parachute on Fire: facebook.com/parachuteonfire
Perce-Oreille: lustucrust.org/perceoreille_skeuds.html
Poles: 1118 East 12th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., CANADA V5T 2J9
Power It Up: Zum Holzfelde, 12 31226, Peine, GERMANY, power-it-up.de
Protagonist: protagonistmusic.bigcartel.com
Psychocontrol: psychocontrol.com
Punk's Shadows: punks-shadow@orange.fr
Push and Pull: facebook.com/pushandpullrecords
Quien Calla Otorga: quien_calla_otorga@hotmail.com
Ramekuukkeli: tuukan@nic.fl, ramekuukkeli.nettisivu.org,
Ravachol: futurenoir.free.fr
Ratbone: ratbone.free.fr
Rebellion: rebellionrecords.nl
Recess: PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA, 90733, recessrecords.com
Resist: resistrecords.com
Rock$tar: rockstarrecords.de
Rotten to the Core: rotteninfo@yahoo.com rtcrecords.blogspot.com
Rudy's Back: rudysback@free.fr
Scumbros: 2013 Bent Valley Rd., Holland, OH 43528, scumbrosrecords@yahoo.com
Shadowhouse: Shadowhouse.bandcamp.com
Shove: chambersband.wordpress.com
Shred to the Grave: 6159 Oldham, Taylor, MI 48180
Simple Circuit: simplecircuit.bandcamp.com
Smartbrains: 755 10th St., Oakland, CA 94606, smartbrainsrecords.blogspot.com
Snappy Little Numbers: PO Box 370602, Denver, CO 80237, snappylittlenumbers.blogspot.com
Sorry State: sorrystaterecrds.com
SPHC: sphc.bigcartel.com
Steady Sounds: steadysounds.com
Stella: stella.bandcamp.com
Take It Back: facebook.com/takeitbackrecs
Tiny Engines: tinyengines.limitedrun.com
To Live A Lie: tolivealie.com
Total Punk: floridasdying.com
TPV: PO Box 250483, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico 00604
Transphobia: lafrancepue.net
Viable Utterance: PO Box 7435, Burbank, CA 91510
Warthog Speak: warthogspeak.com
Who Can You Trust: gizgagz.tumblr.com
XO: xopress.storenvy.com
Zone Onze: zoneonzerecords.com
ZZZ: zzztapes.com

DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Amelia Eakins, Layla Gibbon, Greg Harvester, Modee, Max Power and Jason Ryan.

ABJECT OBJECT – *Local E* – The first track is a nice melodic mid-tempo punk song, totally setting me up for a surprise when they blast off to a thrashing pace on the second song, which is closer to what the rest of this tape sounds like. I can best describe Paris' ABJECT OBJECT as sort of a jangly and more evolved 7 SECONDS, mixed with some pop punk. This tape compiles their 2009 demo and another session from 2011. Really nice looking screened j-card and PINHEAD GUNPOWEDER and MY BLOODY VALENTINE covers. (Matt) (17-song cassette, lyrics included, abject.object@gmail.com)

ACORNS – *Humanure* – I've been hoping these guys would put something out for some time now, and I'm not disappointed. Super heavy handed on the distorted bass, not unlike some old Am/Rep stuff. At first listen, I can see how this could easily be mistaken for some angry, tough guy stuff, but the vocal melodies are kind of, uh, super pretty. I love it! Download code included. (Modee) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, 1319 Wilson Ave, Pensacola, FL 32507)

ANIMAL HAIR – Dragged out drone psyche for when the Xanax wears off. The vocalist really sounds like Thurston Moore in a most disconcerting fashion, but towards the end of the song he starts "singing" and that feeling disappears, though the lyrics are sort of throw away Thurston "poetree" style. Sunglasses rotting off yer face. The music is more SPACEMAN 3/SPIRITUALIZED worship than anything, so more *rock* than *Maximum Rocknroll*. Seems like it's just one song?! Soundtrack for a not particularly memorable bad trip. Made me think of early '90s Creation Records. I like good fucked up demented psychedelic music, TIMMY VULGAR style ya know, but this made me think of when PRIMAL SCREAM try and do the STONES; something's not quite right, and it's got a bar rock feel rather than a freedom/desert-high rock feel. (Layla) (1-song cassette, lyrics included, bummertapes@gmail.com)

BAD AGE – *Slova* – No posing and no gimmicks, just fast and driving Czech hardcore punk with a full sound. It could benefit from a bit more variety, but that's simply a critique, not a complaint. This is from 2012, and if they're still around I bet they're even better now. This DIY package also contains a video that I can't seem to play on my computer. (Matt) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, Petr Novák, Podbor 76 Hrochův Týnec 538 62, Czech Republic, bandzone.cz/badage)

BIAS – *State of Mind* – Fat Wreck influenced pop punk from France. Some personal lyrics, some exploring the social/political themes. Another case of a band that I can't get into, but can't deny is doing their thing well and will surely appeal to fans of the style. (Matt) (13-song CD-R, lyrics included, nevertrustanasshole.tumblr.com)

CHUM RUCKUS – It's 2014 and bands are still writing songs about being born to lose. Looking past that, CHUM RUCKUS plays laid back skate punk that has a loose late '80s SoCal feel to it, not unlike SURF PUNKS or later D.I. It sounds like a fun time and some good shit to make you want to get stoned. (Greg) (8-song CD-R, lyrics included, chumruckus@gmail.com)

COOKIES AND CAKE – Two ladies rapping about baking treats, shakin' booty, smokin' weed, and, uh, doin' it a bunch. I know I'm showing my age and my lack of knowledge of rapping punks, but vocals (and some lyrics) are not unlike YEASTIE GIRLZ, and the beats are provided by PAUL THE P FUNK FRESH, so it's pretty fucking great. (Modee) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, no contact info)

COOL PISS – Driving college rock meets garage rock. If the PARQUET COURTS was a garage band that only played parties in the summer? Something about the way the guy sings when he's sort of reciting the lyrics made me think of the CLEAN/FEELIES… Then they have something that reminds me of Postcard Records and GUIDED BY VOICES, but they are definitely a garage band! One of those tapes that gets better as you keep listening to it, there's an almost *Killed By Death* feel on songs like "Infiltrator" and "Living Outside." You can't judge their sound on the first couple songs because almost every song has a different band idea… The band name is so stupid, and they definitely veer all over the place—it's like the songs were all recorded in different eras of the band. Flip the tape over and it's more straightforward current Goner Records style. Definitely worth checking out. (Layla) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, bummertapes@gmail.com)

DEATH DRIVE – *Never Dance* – Jangly street rock from Oakland, CA. Strange, cracking, off-tempo vocals and some spoken word remind me of NYC's PIGSHIT ENGINE. Songs pack a punch with clever, esoteric lyrics. These guys are definitely having fun at rehearsal, and I bet would demand attention live. I wish this mastered demo came through both speakers on every song. If the vocals were delivered with a little more "oomph" it would get closer to punk than to, say, VIOLENT FEMMES. But that's just me. Art is cool too. Unique writing throughout. The last song is heavy and rocks. Thanks for the patch and pin, DIY. I definitely enjoyed this a lot more on the second listen and that is always a good sign. (Jason) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, deathdriveoakland@gmail.com)

DETHFOX – This is direct, aggressive but dark hardcore punk that would do really well on a lineup with a contemporary band like NO SIR I WON'T. They have the off-kilter vibe of bands from the days of anarcho like RUDIMENTARY PENI and FLUX OF PINK INDIANS with their own melodic hooks. One of my top demos from 2013—expect to hear more from this band! (Amelia) (8-song cassette, no lyrics included, dethfox.punk.mtl@gmail.com)

FÖRFALL – *Decay* – Pummeling hardcore from south Texas featuring at least one member of PORKERIA. Sturdy D-beat drumming and searing guitar tones bring to mind shit like WOLFBRIGADE and DEATH SIDE, but with that unmistakable Texas flair that us Texan's can always detect. The guitar solos strengthen the overall sound rather than work against them. Enok's bark keeps me at attention with my jaw clenched. If you didn't know that the Rio Grande Valley has been a hotbed for genuinely raging punk for over ten years now, FÖRFALL is an excellent example to begin with. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $2 ppd, 609 N. 15th McAllen, TX 78501, vallemiseria@gmail.com)

FRAU – Now this is music for the end of time! There are so many insanely sick bands from London right now; GOOD THROB, FAMILY OUTING, NO, LOWEST FORM, many many more; these punks are part of the

same sect, playing blown out destructive punk that's pummeling noise is music for fans of shit-fi and insane genius ladypunk somewhere between MANNICH DEPRESSIV and NOG WATT with some "Girl on the Run" thrown in for kicks. Seriously perfect punk rock from genius human beings. Will make you wanna quit your job, kill your parents and destroy capitalism. (8-song cassette, lyrics included, riotsnotdiets.bandcamp.com/album/frau-demo)

THE HELLTONS – Clean and polished pop punk with songs about girls and being a misfit. QUEERS and SCREECHING WEASEL without the snot and with the bubblegum knob cranked. And I assume you meant to call your song "Socially Inept" instead of "Socially Retarded," right? Not nice. (Matt) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, nevertrustanasshole.tumblr.com)

KOLLAPSE – Doom and gloom and minor-key melodies to convey it. KALLAPSE appears to be Swedish and alternates slow dirges with up-tempo bursts. One high voice screams, one low voice bellows and a bleak tone persists from start to finish. Lyrics deal mainly with the unthinking human cog in the Machine and humanity's self-destruction. All negative and agonizing, sort of like a sludgy-er DYSTOPIA. (Matt) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, nevertrustanasshole.tumblr.com)

KRUX – Raw and surging punk with a rock'n'roll backbone from McAllen, TX. Mid-tempo, but still fast, early BLACK FLAG guitar tone and strong female voice akin to PDX's SALTED CITY. The lyrics are personal and introspective. The reverb on the vocals could be dialed back just a bit for a smoother mix and it could use a hook here and there, but I still dig this. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, kruxgoneagain@gmail.com, kruxrnr.bandcamp.com)

LECHEROUS GAZE – *On the Skids* – This contains songs previously heard on the *Bagagazo* 7" and *Born on a River* (the *Bagagazo* 7" and then some) 12" EP as well as some new material. This band was born golden and has continued to stay golden in their post-ANNIHILATION TIME days and through some line-up changes. LECHEROUS GAZE puts on a good live act, which transfers well when recorded, and this release is a prime example of that. There's a reason why there is a demand for them across the Earth far away from Oakland, California in far away lands like Australia! The LP on this tape is additionally available on vinyl or CD through Tee Pee Records. RIP CHUCK BERRY. (Amelia) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, Annihilate Records, lecherousgaze@gmail.com)

LIFE POSESSION / VICTIMS OF CLASSWAR – A DIY split CD-R for their 2012 tour. A little late for review, but nonetheless a solid release. LIFE POSESSION hails from Czech Republic and does booming D-beat crust like DOOM, and one TOTALITÄR cover. Germany's VICTIMS OF CLASSWAR come from a more metallic angle in riffage and snarly female vocals. (Matt) (9-song CD-R, lyrics included, aback.bloguje.cz)

MARGY PEPPER – *No Boys No Bass* – Reminds me of TEARDROPS from NYC mixed with the pungent odor of adolescent summers. There is nothing harsh or abrasive about this band. In fact, their sound is very pretty but in a self conscious, awkward way. Three persons from Olympia, Washington minus pretension and devoid of anything except an innocent love of music and an appreciation of small joys. This could be called "dark pop" but it sounds pretty light to me. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, they request mail, 720 Thomas Street SW, Olympia, WA 98502)

MESSRS – This tape was so blown out/warped, it would barely play, one of the downsides of the technology… What I could make out seemed like sorta SCRATCH ACID/CIRCUS LUPUS takes on hardcore punk, wild sneering vocals yowling over unhinged guitars. There are a lot of boring pigfuck revivalists, I would say MESSRS seemed like an exciting prospect in an ocean of boring rockists though. Maybe it's the more punk/hardcore edge that takes 'em out of the dull crowd? Seems appropriate for a Columbus OH group. Worth checking out, bummed this tape was so fucked up. (Layla) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, Savage Quality 308 Clinton St, Columbus, OH 43202)

THE MIRVS – Basement hardcore attack in a *Mastertapes* style for miscreants and the malfunctional. Lyrics are dumb suburban complaints and inside jokes, and it's a satisfying listen, classic constructs of Midwestern meat'n'potatoes HC present and correct with the added bonus of some decent song construction skills. Makes me wanna grab my skate and head to the quarter pipe instead of the workplace. (Layla) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, no contact info except that they are from Rockford, IL)

MYSTIC INANE – Four tracks of cool punk with odd riffs from New Orleans. I hear an old SST vibe. A little MINUTEMEN, early MEAT PUPPETS and the reckless vocal antics of Sam McPheeters. Damaged and weird, but well played and recorded perfectly. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, $5 ppd, M. Inane, 3111 Palmyra St., New Orleans, LA 70119)

NO BUSINESS – This local band combines two members of two other excellent locals: DIEHARD and DETACH DOLLS. NO BUSINESS plays straightforward, mid-tempo punk rock with a slight surf influence...like in that same way that DEAD KENNEDYS had a surf influence. Fucking pissed female vocals lead the way through the storm. I can't really shake a comparison to X, but maybe it's just that their songs have that same hard-to-pin-down feeling in the guitars that you hear in "Nausea". Only four songs but I'm sold. Excellent demo tape! (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, nobusiness1.bandcamp.com)

NO CODE – Six hot licks that are not unlike the LOOKOUTS. Actually, I made a comparison last month to that band, so I re-listened to that MENDOCINO HOMELAND EP, to make sure I wasn't crazy, and yeah, these songs could've easily been snuck onto that. I happen to love that old band, so I think I like this a lot. (Modee) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, itsonlynoise@hotmail.com)

NO STATIK – This tape is the band's 12" *Everywhere You Aren't Looking* remixed and completely fucked with by the band and Greg Wilkinson (a.k.a. Earhammer Soundsystem). Goddamn it's amazing. Right out of the gate, it's relentless. Thrashing guitars and Ruby's unmistakable ripped vocal cord yell. Soon, you can tell this is gonna be different when all the instruments are blown out sounding and the songs are picked apart and dissected to a point where they barely resemble their former selves (and sometimes, not at all). There are elements of noise, techno, ambient soundscapes and of course, the triumphant hardcore that NO STATIK is known for. There are layers and layers of noise and effects drenched into every song and the results are intoxicating and wholly satisfying. If you're a fan of the side-long tracks on this band's 12" records, you will feel right at home with this tape. It's a masterpiece. (Greg) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, nostatikhc@gmail.com)

NOWADAYZ – *The Will is Still For Free* – A French band doing a technically proficient style of punk that strongly recalls PROPAGHANDI. A lot. Though I don't like it, I must admit they really pull it off well in all departments and have really well thought out lyrics—not preachy, but critical and politically conscious in nature. The recording is digitally crisp and the playing is as tight as can be. Fans of the style will dig. (Matt) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, nevertrustanasshole.free.fr)

OCCULTONOMY – For some reason this reminded me of that library-core band from a few years ago?! Their name escapes me. They would only play at libraries though? Anyway OCCULTONOMY is a two-piece fastcore/powerviolence group with some sick breakdowns, their lyrics are what sets them apart however, they are all science themed! The song about being in love with science/being a

scientist was definitely on the next level; you'll have to send off for the tape to see how genius the lyrics are. There's also one about skating on Mars, one about how much reading rules and one about bigfoot! They are proud nerds and their band is rad and ridiculous. In short this is pretty goofy but extremely enjoyable, with dueling male/female vocals in places, mostly the guitarist sings though, reminding me of the woman from MARGARET THRASHER mixed with some INFEST influence, but you'll have to write the bass parts in your head as there's no bass. (Layla) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, N. Haurberg, 1693 N Broad St, Galesberg, IL 61401, realityisacult.bandcamp.com/album/occultonomy-demo)

OLDE SHAME – *Griz on the Sidewalk* – OLDE SHAME self-identifies as hell punk and hails from Richmond, Virginia. The first track is really awesome, but all in all the vocals on this demo are a bit too sloppy for me. The DICKS cover of "Dead in a Motel Room" just ended up bummin' me out! Learn how to own that sloppiness, guys—slow it down and make that sloppiness sound fuckin' cool. (Max) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, FLISH/ICSR, 211 N. 36th St, Richmond, VA 23223)

OLD MAN PERRY – These guys play a sort of lo-fi grindcore that employs a guitar played through a practice amp and a drum set composed of pots and pans. The songs are about their hometown of Wallingford, Vermont, and most of the words are vomited out in a low growl…true grind style. I can't see this being of much interest to serious grind fans, but if you're into "whatever happens" style, small-town punk, this might be your thing. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, oldmanperry.tumblr.com)

OLD CITY – *Sunny Days EP* – A delightful blend of somber PDX punk and '00s Copenhagen—YOUNG WASTENERS to be specific, especially in the vocal delivery. This shit is fucking great! These songs are epic as much as they are punk, which is rare. Infectious and fresh guitar and bass-lines interplay with each other to create a not-so-sunny soundscape. Most new bands I hear seem to kind of regurgitate riffs, aesthetics and styles, but only some are great and can pull it off well. OLD CITY is doing their own thing here, oozing with fervor and intensity. These are the moments that make seeking new bands exciting and worthwhile. My new favorite demo—do not miss! (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, $5ppd, 9215 N Tyler Ave., Portland, OR 97203, oldcitypunx@gmail.com)

ORANGE SUNSHINE – *Burnout at Roadburn* – For those of you who don't know, orange sunshine is a type of LSD, which is a semisynthetic psychedelic drug of the ergoline family. And for the record, this band is a total trip in itself. ORANGE SUNSHINE sounds like BLUE CHEER mixed with DANZIG dramatic vocals and a totally '70s rocker psychedelic guitar experience with the attitude of the MC5. This is exactly what you'd expect from Who Can You Trust? Records, who have released HOT LUNCH, LECHEROUS GAZE, OVVL and WITCH, just to name a few. Apparently this was recorded live at the Roadburn Festival in 2007 but you would never know it was a live recording or that it's from this era. If you like psych rock and having a good time, then I can't recommend this release enough. This ain't no hippie shit! (Amelia) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, www.whocanyoutrustrec.wordpress.com)

PSYCHIC BAOS – First and foremost, PSYCHIC BAOS plays dirty, loose, raw, analog-loving garage rock, but they also throw in exciting elements of psych, noise, skronk and garbage to round out a truly primitive sound. I mean, this shit sounds *fucked* in the best way… like it's coming from truly deranged, true freaks, which is some of my favorite kind of music. One of the songs sounds like it's two different songs being played at the same time…it's like that. This tape is great and really raw sounding, the way all good rock'n'roll should be. Oh, and it's outta print. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, magneticsouthrecordings.org)

SLAKTERI – *Por Que Quieres Llorar, Si Ni Siquiera Tienes Ojos Para Ver* – Donned with a drawing of a priest vomiting a bucketful on the cover, this cassette by French band (but sung in Spanish) SLAKTERI blares pure noise punk. Even though I can hear the drums and bass playing together, I literally cannot follow any song on the tape except for the one or two slow parts. Guitar noise à la CONFUSE et al. is constant and voice-cracking yells persist at their own leisure. A noisepunk-trained ear would probably appreciate this mess much more that myself. This is how I felt when I saw ISTERISMO—confused. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, nicoespoir@no-log.org)

THEE TSUNAMIS – These three ladies from Indiana play no coast, heavy surf-influenced garage rock with a warm analog sound that's tastefully bathed in reverb. With some influences that may range from THEE HEADCOATEES and '60s garage to more contemporary fare like THEE OH SEES, they still manage to hold down their own sound with desperate, raspy vocals and a dirty, ragged guitar tone. I haven't been into garage rock in a long time, but hearing rock'n'roll that comes from an honest, pure place like this makes me reconsider my actions. Excellent! (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, magneticsouthrecordings.org)

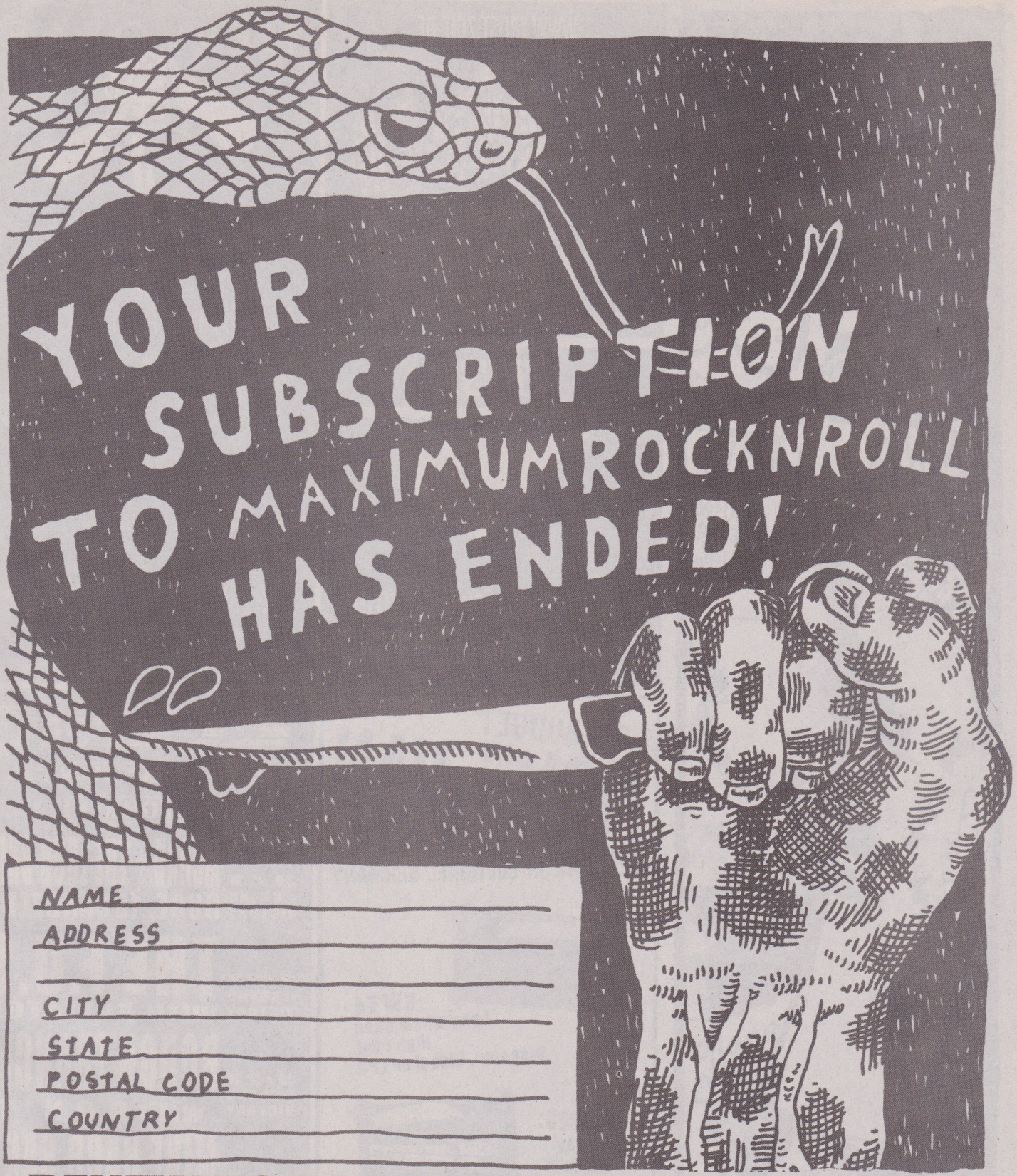
TRENCHES – Brand new Oakland hardcore band featuring a couple women and a couple men from some prominent Bay Area bands from the past year or two. Songs are succinct and the recording is perfect. Boo Boo's vocals are about as effectively angry as it gets. The arrangements are simple but interesting enough to make this band stand out from the hordes of current hardcore bands taking cues from NEGATIVE APPROACH and all those old Boston bands. Rhythmically varied, building and exploding, rising and falling, full of hooks and power. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, trencheshxc.bandcamp.com)

ULTERIORS – Middle of the road, boring bar punk. You know how it felt when major label bands in the '90s would try to play a fast "punk" song on their albums and it just felt flat and fake? That's how this feels. Music made for and by tourists. (Greg) (6-song CD, lyrics included, pariah.ulteriors@gmail.com)

WET DRAG – Sick art punkers from Oakland, crazed noodle-y almost (but not quite) MINUTEMEN style bass with savage NO TREND/no wave/end times guitar dripped all over it while all three vocalists aim for your throat… Bratty, demonic, invoking SCISSOR GIRLS and totally raging whilst doing so. Members of STILLSUIT/RUBY PINS/GRASS WIDOW if you care about such things. Tape is crazed and amazing. (Layla) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, wetdrag.bandcamp.com)

WORRIED MOTHERS – Quite a broad selection of styles here from post-punk to garage to psyche, but with a common textural thread of gloom throughout. I can't help but think of the ADVERTS because the vocalist sounds *so much* like TV Smith in both vocal quality and inflection. Consistent use of a piano really gives them a distinctly mature sound. Occasionally it comes off as self-indulgent indie rock, but overall I feel like WORRIED MOTHERS is more crafty and talented than pretentious. It's really good. (Matt) (9-song cassette, spider webs instead of lyrics, worriedmothers@gmail.com, doomtownrecords.com)

V/A – *Lost Colony: Pensacola Punk 2006-2012* – It's efforts like these that make me proud to call Pensacola my home town, sixteen bands, 30 tracks of heartfelt, dark, small town punk. Mostly spastic hardcore, noise jams, thrash, and fucked up garage. I left town before a few of these bands formed, so it's great to hear this wildness. The sound quality is a little all over the place, but it comes with an adorable little booklet and a download code. Last I heard this cassette was almost sold out, and for a good reason…it's surprisingly fucking great! (Modee) (30-song cassette, lyrics not included, pinholecollapse.com)



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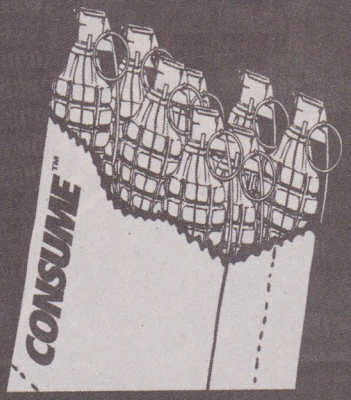

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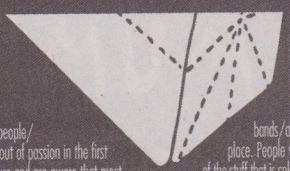

We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING- IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

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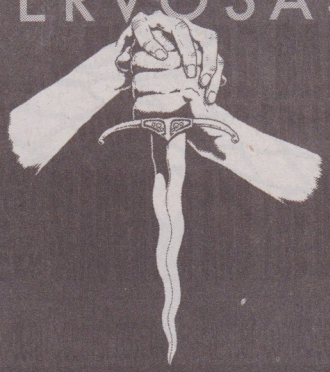

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ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(VX) Vanessa Asswipe
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booz
(EC) E. Conner
(JD) Justin Davisson
(SF) Sami Fink
(FF) Francesca Foglia
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(DZ) Ryan Modee
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(LA) Lydia Phelps
(MP) Max Power
(FU) Ray Suburbia

ACEFALO #1 / $?
5.25 x 8 – printed – 12 pgs – Spanish
This is a fanzine out of Santiago, Chile that is focused on the grind/powerviolence side of punk. This first issue gives us a brief, but poetic back-story of its creation. In this issue we have the aforementioned editorial writing, another editorial about bands who complain about playing first and/or last, short but interesting interviews with Uruguayan powerviolence Beatriz Carnicero and Colombian "grind violence" band Chulo and very well-written reviews. This is a very cool looking zine with great imagery, good use of negative space and very easy to read, but creative layouts. Cool zine! (MB)
lasentenciazine@hotmail.com

ACEFALO #2 / $?
5.25 x 8 – printed – 12 pgs – Spanish
This is the second edition of this rad zine from Santiago, Chile with even better content than the last. The reviews are well-written, just as the first issue, and there are short but well executed interviews with Dios Hastio and Arrastrados Batouncielo. This issue has a bit more editorial and article writing which brings this issue to the top. There is an inspiring editorial about the drive to make this zine, a story about discovering punk in a small city and a killer article about how Latin America is unique to the experiences Europe and the US, and how instead of looking elsewhere for answers (to the societies that colonized the region in the first place), about it's identity within. The weight of history is undeniable, but this article is a definite "fuck off" to those who deny self-identification of the region. The person doing this zine is a concise and powerful writer. Well done. (MB)
lasentenciazine@hotmail.com

AJATUKSEN VALO #8 / $?
7 x 7 – printed – 80 pgs
Impeccably designed zine, which unfortunately, is entirely in Finnish. Seems like this mag focuses on more melodic punk as evidenced by the included interview with Combat Rock Industry, as well as the pictures and features on bands I'm not familiar with such as Cigarette Crossfire, Sarkyneet, Merries, and the Amistad. Also included are standard things such as record reviews and retrospectives (Asta Kask, Irwin Goodman). Looks cool! (KM)
Jpar.blogspot.fi
Piparnakkeli.kamakarhu@gmail.com

DEGENERATE #14 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
Another issue is out of the thinking man's fanzine of our time, *Degenerate* #14! Wait, what happened to thirteen? Was the master chomped up in the copy machine? Seized by customs? Burned in a teenage ritual? No, it was skipped on purpose – like the mystery floor in a Vegas casino, suspicion trumps reason for the sake of posterity. The fourteenth issue has been renamed *E'trenegade,* which is French for "gimme a break." Among the highlights are interviews with Jess Scott of Brilliant Colors/Make-a-Mess renown and the indisputable creator of the Crass symbol, Dave King. There's also some deep thoughts on Sweden's shit-fi freaks Anti-Earth Motherfuckers, Irreparables, Pregnancy Scares, and Wild Child. Thoughtful, current, and well-put-together, *Degenerate* continues to live up to its reputation as brain food for the maladjusted. That said, Captured Tracks is just another subculture racket and Paul Virilio is a twerp, but *E'trenegade, Degenerate, "13 not 13"* gets another thumbs up from battle-torn, post issue #13 *Maximum Rocknroll* anyway. (FF)
Degenerate / PO Box 3272 / Berkeley, CA 94703 / USA

DORIS #30 / $3.85
8.5 x 7 – printed – 32 pgs
Cindy's zines really lead me through my late adolescence. Her words validated a lot of the shit I felt about being a stupid girl hanging out with stupid freaks. She illuminated this really specific feminism for me. The idea was that just because you got handed the shit hand didn't mean there wasn't hope for you. That beyond the violence, the poverty, the crazy things you thought that someday there was redemption. Someday there was a peaceful mind. In this issue Cindy goes into depths about her own recent explorations into this idea. She tells stories about befriending norms in her somatic therapy program and notions of community support that extend past identity expression and rely on instances of mutual support and trust. Cindy seems to be approaching her peaceful mind. The issue is ended with a small exploration into sexual abuse and notions of "accountability". She relates stories of her own abuse and abuses and ways in which she sees there was possible accountability/growth and where there wasn't. The subject is ended with an interview with a New York based collective called Support NY that focuses on survivor support and perpetrator accountability. I have first hand experience with this collective. To be honest my experience involved in a "process of accountability"

for my abusive ex was altogether miserable and non-productive. I think putting power or praise on a group like this is fucked up and problematic. I felt over and over like my needs were hijacked from me and nothing positive happened what so ever. If you want get this issue but don't be delusional about what a "community" can provide for you. If you need help or healing talk to people you *know* and take care of yourself. Don't delude yourself into thinking that people that *say* they can or want to do something will at all. And whatever you do don't call on these assholes to have your back. Do not expect anyone to advocate for you and fuck everyone else. Restorative justice can only go so far and sometimes it's totally fine to make someone get the fuck out or beat the shit out of someone who hurt you. (EC)
Doris Press / PO Box 29 / Athens, OH 45701 / dorisdorisdoris.com

FREAK TENSION #15 / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 18 pgs
Freak Tension celebrated its fifteenth anniversary in December and this issue is full of more self-proclaimed weirdness. This is a fun zine to read, full of amusing anecdotes, music reviews, a couple of interviews, a recipe (roasted minotaur gizzards, anyone?), and even a word search ("eat poop" was the first phrase I found). It's a great punk zine and the cover art (by Bill Hauser) is pretty excellent. Check it out, zine freaks! (SF)
freaktension.com /
freaktension@yahoo.com

GENEVA 13: A ZINE OF THE LOCAL #20 / $2, Geneva locals: free
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 60 pgs
We can all talk about our hometowns and some of this might include anything from shit talk to plain appreciation for the place you live in or came from. I know the stories of my neighborhood and I talk about them constantly. *Geneva 13* took this concept and put it in writing. This issue focuses on Linden Street, or as they would call it, the heart of Geneva. It's seriously in the middle of everything. The zine explores small businesses with workers and owners of these shops through interviews and gives little context into the lives of the folks living in Geneva. I do have to admit, I am not the most interested in Geneva, and honestly the only communities I care about are low-income communities of color; always have, always will. *Geneva 13*, this is a great idea. I hope this is the type of concept that other communities can take, especially, those low-income communities of color. Imagine all the stories? I love this concept and although I might not be very interested in Geneva, I definitely do encourage everyone to pay attention to what is being done here. With some pretty awesome photos and real testimonies It's actually a pretty awesome concept. I can actually say I know a thing or two about this town now. (OG)
Geneva 13 Press / PO Box 13 / Geneva / NY 14456 / mail@geneva13.com

GRRRLS IN SUBCULTURE #1 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 28 pgs
International grrrl solidarity is appealing. Intersectional feminisms in punk are like a goal. If you need interviews in English about cool lady bands overseas and stateside this little zine/blog is a cool resource. The interviews are a little formulaic but get the job done. Everything is queer and feminine and pink and cute. (EC)
grrrlszine@riseup.net /
grrrlsinsubculture.tumblr.com

KOOGMO #7 / $1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs
This is really fucking refreshing. A simple zine printed on four sheets of paper and stapled in the top right corner like it's a fucking worksheet packet from the sixth grade. Just a couple strong simple stories about delicate and intimate small interactions at the flea market. It's finished by a few pages of a submission "zine" that details a man's personal conspiracy theories on why he wasn't allowed parole. It includes official documents and everything. When I see shit like this it really pisses me off that every cool smart person I know is *still* too fucking busy to put a couple few pages together every so often. It also makes me happy that Plano, TX. has got this guy. (EC)
PO Box 861294 / Plano, TX 75086 / anthony@koogmo.com

LAST NIGHT AT THE CASINO #6 / $3 or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 38 pgs
If you love *Catcher in the Rye*, and are intrigued by fan-fiction in the exact voice of Holden Caulfield, well then, this here is for you. Spoiler alert: he didn't update the political incorrectness of his voice. Hell, I can imagine Holden ending up in the Southwest after his mental break, becoming a craps dealer at some casino and hating it just as much as he hates everything and everyone else (except for the few great hopes left out there,) and I suppose I'm vaguely sucked in to the eerie close-encounters-underworld of gambling, but I still couldn't quite read the whole thing. (JB)
Billy / 432 Manzano St. NE Apt B / Albuquerque, NM 87108 / IKnowBilly@gmail.com

LET DOWN #1 /$?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied –34 pgs
A zine made by two roommates that definitely like pop and folk punk. Record reviews, show reviews, some poetry and a really funny list of the 25 things you learn from going to Columbia, the open admission art school in Chicago. There are also movie reviews and an interview with Lost Cat Records. The style is very "my first zine" cut and paste. Decent for what it is. (AP)
1670 W. Division St / Chicago, Il 60622 / kylebutler@gmail.com

NEXT LEVEL #1 / $1.50, $3 world, free to prisoners
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 6 pgs
A three-panel comic collaboration between *Rot*'s Katrina and Jane from the band, KSRRKPIRG, all done mostly thru the mail, of psychedelic punk witch meltdowns. Fold it out to a legal sized paper depicting a graveyard full of dead punk heroes, knives, pokemon a burning church and much more. (AP)
c/o Witch Club / PO Box 29335 / Providence, RI 02909 / milkbone@angelic.com`

NO GODS NO MATTRESS #21 / $2 or $1 with duckling feathers
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
Holy shit, it just seems like yesterday that I opened up my mailbox to find the first issue of this zine and a sweet letter from Enola. Well, they have made it to issue 21 and by the looks of it have no intentions to stop. In this issue they decide to kinda settle down and live in a squat and get a

job, but that doesn't last very long as the job is found out to be notoriously disorganized and sketchy. There is also an exclusive interview with Micheal Gira that you can't miss! As per usual there is a lot of working out of many tender goth-punk feels with accompanying self-portraits. It always surprises me how they are able to convey such vulnerability and intensity of serious emotions in a non-threatening manner. While it doesn't play down the severity the end result is raw and affirming. My favorite perzine that exists outside of the late '90s. (AP)
PO Box 3936 / Berkeley, CA / dudenowhey@gmail.com

POINTLESS EXISTENCE #1 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
Martin is in Omaha, NE and started this zine that covers the usual records and touring topics with Danish crusties Nuclear Death Terror, svenskmangelers, Raw Hate and Lincoln-based black/war metal filthoids, Vickers. First time I've seen in a crust/punk leaning zine mention Goatpenis (the sketchy Brazilian "war metal band", not schlongs from the horned ones). There's also a review of the 2012 Subversion Fest in Oakland written en español (which I only got part of 'cause my Spanish is pretty bad) as well as reviews of some punk/garage/crust/black metal records. The layout is basic with the text, headers all in the "proper" place with images of the bands playing live and their respective records. In all, an OK short read but I'd like to see more other in-depth interviews like the one he did with Nuclear Death Terror and less black metal bands as Vickers had fuck all of interest to say other than: "*cult burning hair!*" (JD)
4409 N. 63rd St. / Omaha, NE 68104

POSITIVE CREED #21 / £1
8 x 12 – printed – 23 pgs
Positive Creed is a solid and standard DIY punk zine from the UK—a bit of politics, a lot of music, and just the right amount of sass to not sound like your average lame-ass music magazine. The highlight of this issue, for me, was a pretty interesting and elaborate interview with various members of the classic punk band Sham 69. Personally, I found this zine to be a little too large to be convenient to read, but the content was readable and entertaining enough. (SF)
PO Box 777, EX1 9TU, England, UK / positivecreed@gmail.com

QUICKENING #3 / $2 Canada, $3 world, trades OK
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
I can't even with this. Within the first couple of pages this person was talking about how they went to a workshop to learn shamanism. I kind of stopped listening right there. Paying $600 to some white lady to tell you a bunch of shit she appropriated and stole and misconstrued from indigenous folks? Ya...no. Also, fuck Martha Lucier (the woman who puts these workshops on) I hope she has a vision quest off a cliff. Anyways back to this zine. You can read about roller derby and a whole bunch of woo. This is like a perzine version of that free paper you get at the co-op. (AP)
719 John St W. / Listowel, Ontario / N4W 1B6 / Hedibear@yahoo.ca

ROT #5 / $3, $5 world
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs
Gritty teen witches come alive in the pages of this comic. Catlike humanoids seek revenge on cops. Punk angels guard the lives of dogs. A good portion on this zine is taken up by people's dreams drawn into comic form à la *Slow Wave* but it's less on descriptions and more just a delivery of images which makes things more weird and interesting. The art kinda reminds me of Caroline Paquita, but for juvenile delinquents. Get this zine! (AP)
c/o Witch Club / PO Box 29335 / Providence, RI 02909 / milkbone@angelic.com

SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM #12 / $2 ppd US, Canada, Mexico, $5 ppd world
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 24 pgs
From the infectious enthusiasm of early issues of *SITF* to the more frustrating reality of this one, Joe Laucht is one of the very few zinesters who can go into depth about his feelings, experiences, and opinions on music in a semi-stream-of-consciousness yet articulate style without it sounding overly dramatic or self-indulgent, let alone come across as compelling, but he pulls it off again and again. A good chunk of this zine is made up of long-form reviews of tapes made by bands with whom his band Panzram played on tour, which reads somewhat like a tour diary and put said tapes into the context of his relationships with the bands. There are also some 7" reviews, and writings at the beginning, along with Bob Suren's very heavy piece on how his love of punk led to his divorce from his wife of eighteen years, which offers an unseen look into a person who got a huge chunk of Florida into punk and the toll it ultimately took on him. Absolutely worth picking up. (DG)
Joe Laucht / PO Box 457 / Ft. Myers, FL 33902

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #68 / 2 stamps or trade
4.25 x 7 – copied – 36 pgs
This issue is pretty review-heavy. There are shorter looks at beverages, zines, books, and some reunion shows, and longer pieces on older and sometimes obscure acts the editor is stoked on—Hogan's Heroes, Malignus Youth, and the Mob. The music writing focuses more on the songs and aesthetic and less on history. I wasn't particularly drawn in by his criticism, but for fans of these bands this could be nice. In discussing Malignus Youth he mentions the flack they got for being Christians when they released a hardcore-influenced Mass(!), calling it "stupid" that anyone was "threatened" by it—as if that's why punks don't wanna hear that shit. A rather stupid pro-Christian book is favorably reviewed as well. The author seems to have a blind spot regarding the punk disdain (in majority-Christian countries) for religion in general and Christianity in particular. I'm sympathetic to cheap zines with plenty of writing and enthusiasm, a distinctive character, and no ads, but didn't find this one to be crucial. (JM)
516 Third St. / Massillon, OH 44646

STREET PREACHER #1 / $2 ppd US, $4 world
7 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Made by lit punx—the kind who avidly love thinking and talking about thinking, or their culture obsession of the time and tirelessly research. If you like those things even a little bit, you'll be interested in

everything in this very stylish zine. It's subtitled *The New York Hardcore Review of Books*, and thus is pretty varied: no question at all that the editor and the many contributors are fiercely devoted to the underground-ed lifestyle, though there's a lot of not-music related reading herein. I'm talking about the oft-shafted poetry that is so undervalued here in our community and I bet that even the worst of the haters could do themselves a favor and open their damn mind for once. Dave, the editor, dreams about finding a new translation of Andrei Voznesensky's writings and then remembers enough about it to coherently analyze it. Colin from *Slice Harvester* shares his theory that the lyrics of Rancid's s/t LP are evidence that Tim was studying for the GED at the time. Anahit reviews sci-fi of interest to freaks like us. The scene report on the lyrics of NY's punk/hardcore bands is a *Nuts!*-ian jaunt that is exactly (literally) what I want to be reading. I'm a fan of this, looking forward to issue 2! (JB)
Dave Morse / PO Box 110040 / Brooklyn, NY 11211 / moshforjesus@gmail.com

TRASH HEAP #1, 2, 3 / $1.50, $1.50, $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs, 18 pgs, 28 pgs
Traveling stories and autobiographical accounts from the author's upbringing can be found in this zine. Black and white layouts, cut and paste images, typewriter font, and punk lyrics are scattered around. While the stories have a lot of sincerity, the writing was a little mechanical and didn't hold me captive. Issue #1 is mostly about the author's misadventures in Berkeley where he tried to catch the Filth reunion show at Gilman and issue #2 has a lot more content and contributed pieces, the writing also improves. *Trash Heap* #1 and #2 is a good first start and is worth checking out if you like stories about traveling, adventure, and staying under the radar. The editor states that he wants to get away from writing traveling stories, yet issue #3 is filled with 'em! There are show reviews and book reviews that were not present in previous issues, and a funny page of cut-up bible verses which can be credited to the author's Catholic upbringing. The layout is improving and so is the writing. If you're a fellow hitchhiker and traveler, send this kid two bux and get yourself a copy of *Trash Heap*. (VX)
23 S. Owyhee St. / Boise, ID 83705

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #121 / $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
The content in here is a little dated—the show reviews are about a year old. Local DIY venue the Hairhole closed down and editor Boone supplies us with numerous photos of a diverse range of bands that played there. Interviewed are In Defence and Columbia's own Rip Rap. As is usual here, neither interview is outstanding, though Rip Rap does briefly touch on the gentrification of downtown Columbia. The political writing critiques far-right assholes. I tend to think anyone who would pick up a local zine won't have their eyes opened by these insights. At least the photography documents lesser-known bands. If you've read *The Trouble With Normal* before, you know what you're getting. (JM)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444 / thetroublewithnormal.tripod.com

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 27 / donation based
11.5 x 17 – printed – 32 pgs
It's always a pleasure receiving a copy of *Turning The Tide*. This zine/journal has been printing for 25 years already! This issue is a celebration of those 25 years serving communities with information on all social justice and political issues. This publication follows a timeline from the first copy ever printed in 1988 to the most recent issue 26 in 2013! It seems that *Turning The Tide* never rests. They constantly put in work that is completely submission friendly and donation based. Much of the zine is oriented around anti-racist action, but in a "think globally, act locally" manner—one that proves strategic and understandable, especially when we have to deal with shit all the time, everywhere. The timeline on this issue gives some articles giving context into what issues were covered within the last 25 years and cover photos. I loved it, and everyone should support what they have going on! They even have $16 annual subscriptions, what a deal! (OG)
Anti-Racist Action / PO Box 1055 / Culver City / CA 90232 /
tideturning.org/subscribe

TWO SKUNKS FOR VALENTINES DAY / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 24 pgs
This zine is alternately titled *A Trip to Awesome Fest 6*, and, unfortunately, it is just that. A zine about going to a fest. A fest where he uncomfortably flew to, saw some bands, got tired and went home to his regular life. My major issue with this zine is that going to fests in this manner is something thousands of us do every year, and the stories and memories that any given one of us have, of any given half hour, could make for a more interesting read. At no point did the author, Mike, get lost, meet a new best friend, terribly misjudge something or someone, reevaluate his ideals, try something new, lose his shit, or…anything. He just saw some bands he liked and went home. (DZ)
Mike Faloon / PO Box 469 / Patterson, NY 12563 / gogometric@yahoo.com

WANTED: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE #1
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 56 pgs
2013 was quite the year for incarcerated LGBTIQ folks. As of last week CeCe McDonald was finally released after being imprisoned for 19 months for defending her life from a misogynistic Nazi. While mile markers like this are far from a total win her release serves as a reminder of what's possible. As she continues to make it a point we all need to remember that stories like hers are hardly rare. Wanted is a journal of erotic prose for queers inside. Short, simple stories about getting it on. Sometimes sweet, sometimes rough and sometimes weird. Accompanied by erotic (though not explicit) illustrations. Prison sexuality is a nebulous thing indeed. For most the idea of sex in prison conjures violent social order. While that is a part of reality, for some, intimacy inside is a saving grace. Whether it's physical or long distance everyone needs a little lovin'. If you're interested in contributing they are looking for prose and non-nude erotic art. (EC)
c/o Bernard Gastropoda / PO Box 1126 / Asheville, NC 28802 /
smutsaywut@riseup.net

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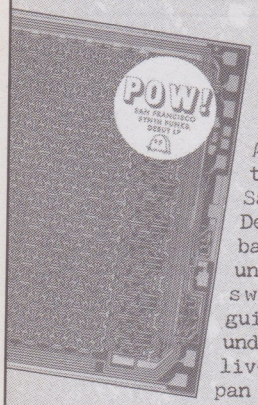

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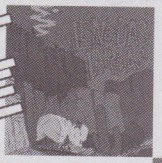

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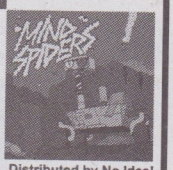

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